

# ACROSS THE PLAINS '6 IN 4



JOHN S. COLLINS.

*The Bancroft Library*

University of California • Berkeley

Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2007 with funding from  
Microsoft Corporation





AA

0-50 -

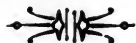


JOHN S. COLLINS

# Across the Plains in '64



INCIDENTS OF EARLY DAYS WEST OF THE MISSOURI RIVER  
—TWO THOUSAND MILES IN AN OPEN BOAT FROM  
FORT BENTON TO OMAHA—REMINISCENCES OF  
THE PIONEER PERIOD OF GALENA, GEN-  
ERAL GRANT'S OLD HOME.



BY JOHN S. COLLINS.



OMAHA, NEBRASKA.  
NATIONAL PRINTING COMPANY.  
1904.

**COPYRIGHT BY**  
**JOHN S. COLLINS**  
**1904.**

## TO THE RECIPIENTS OF THIS VOLUME

*Yielding to the continued solicitation of his friends, after the first volume of "Across the Plains in '64" was published, Mr. John S. Collins finally decided to add to the volume several of the more noteworthy happenings which were a part of his remarkably adventurous life in the real west, before railroads had made transcontinental travel easy. When most of the manuscript had been prepared it was deemed best to incorporate the first volume and the latter additions in one volume. Mr. Collins' sudden death upset all plans for the production of the new volume at the time he had decided to publish it.*

*But, acting upon the impulse to carry out the wishes of their uncle, just as if he were with them, the nephews and nieces of Mr. Collins decided to have the new volume published as a memorial to their uncle who had done a pioneer's share in the taming of the wilderness.*

*The relatives of Mr. Collins who have made it possible that this hitherto unwritten history of the west shall remain a lasting monument to his memory, are in possession of scores of letters from distinguished men and women who received the first volume from its author, which commend in unstinted measure their pleasure at receiving such a gift. Probably there are few volumes which have been so highly commended by "the men of the country" for truthfulness and real merit. One of the foremost literary journals in America compared the first volume with the works of Francis Parkman, which it resembled in many particulars.*

*The undersigned, who had charge of the editing of Mr. Collins' manuscript, has left it just as it was written by him, the work of editing concerning almost entirely punctuation and capitalization. Mr. Collins made no pretense to literary style. He had been a business man all his life and he has prepared such a volume as a business man who had a remarkable memory would write.*

*R. F. G.*

*Omaha, Neb., January, 1911.*

## ILLUSTRATIONS

COVER DESIGN.....	By Doane Powell
FRONTISPIECE (PART I).....	John S. Collins
FRONTISPIECE (PART II) "Five Terrors of the Wind River Range"	
THREE DAYS' KILL.....	Opposite page 61, Part II
BAT AND THE BEAR SKINS.....	Opposite page 64, Part II
INDIANS IN CAMP.....	Opposite page 64, Part II
LEAVING FORT FETTERMAN.....	Opposite page 66, Part II
BUNCHED UP IN THE ROAD.....	Opposite page 66, Part II
CROSSING THE PLATTE.....	Opposite page 66, Part II
"ANTELOPE VERY CUNNING" .....	Opposite page 76, Part II
READY FOR THE HUNT.....	Opposite page 82, Part II
"FUSSIN' " ABOUT CAMP.....	Opposite page 86, Part II
AUTHOR'S KEYS WHICH WENT THROUGH SAN FRANCISCO	
EARTHQUAKE AND FIRE.....	Opposite page 139, Part II

## DEDICATION.

---

*This little book is dedicated to the memory of James McNear, my companion, friend and guide, on my trip Across The Plains In '64, and down the Missouri river in an open boat from Fort Benton to Omaha, two thousand miles. No more loyal man ever lived. His bravery was never questioned. He was a true man and a sincere friend.*

*JOHN S. COLLINS.*





## PREFACE.

At the request of members of my family and intimate friends, I have briefly sketched some of my experiences in the West, before the days of the railroad. This little book is intended for private circulation. I have made no effort to give the sketches a literary dress. I have only attempted to relate from diary and memory, in a matter of fact way, a number of interesting incidents, which, in the hands of an experienced writer would, in my opinion, furnish material for an interesting volume.

JOHN S. COLLINS.

Omaha, Nebraska, 1904.



## CONTENTS.

DEDICATION .....	3
PREFACE .....	5
ACROSS THE PLAINS IN '64 .....	9
NOTES BY THE WAY .....	36
A FRESH-KILLED MOOSE .....	38
A RICH CLEAN-UP .....	39
FAST STAGING .....	40
THE GOLD MINER'S MARKET .....	41
A MOUNTAIN SHEEP HEAD .....	41
TWO THOUSAND MILES IN AN OPEN BOAT .....	44
A HERD OF MULES .....	59
ABOUT AN ARMY POST TRADERSHIP .....	65
HUNTING BIG GAME WITH A MILITARY ESCORT .....	69
IF YOU DON'T PRAY BEFORE YOU EAT, YOU WON'T STEAL .....	73
THE SIOUX INDIAN COMMISSION .....	76
A FEAST WITH SPOTTED TAIL .....	84
COUNCIL WITH THE YANCTONAIIS .....	86
BURIAL OF THE DAUGHTER OF AMERICAN HORSE.....	90
A BRAVE INDIAN .....	91
A HUNTING TRIP WITH CARL SCHURZ, WEBB C. HAYES, AND ARTIST GAULLIER .....	96
THE HUNTER'S PARADISE .....	100
HUNTING BIG GAME WITH A PACK TRAIN .....	114
THE SCOUT .....	122
"CRAZY HORSE" BONES .....	134
VAGABONDING WITH A GENERAL MANAGER .....	136
GALENA, ILLINOIS, GENERAL GRANT'S OLD HOME .....	139
THE METTLE OF GRANT .....	150



## ACROSS THE PLAINS IN '64.

From My Diary.

JOHN S. COLLINS.

*A certain interest will always attach to the record of that which passed away, never to return.*"—Francis Parkman.

Council Bluffs was a better outfitting point for emigrants in '64 than Omaha. March 23rd I crossed the Missouri river on the steam ferry with six two and four mule teams, loaded with merchandise for the gold mines of Virginia City. At Council Bluffs there came to me an honest, rough looking fellow with a note from a friend in Dubuque, Iowa. It read: "I send you Jim McNear; take him along; he is 'true blue' and 'all sand.'" No better recommendation could be given a man in those pioneer days. So Jim was placed in charge of my tents and cooking.

Ferriage from Council Bluffs to Omaha was \$1.00 for one wagon and one span, and twenty-five cents per head for loose stock. At Omaha I met my father, Eli A. Collins, and my brother, Gilbert H. Collins.

A fine prospect opened here for business, and on March 23rd, my brother and myself entered into co-partnership under the firm name of G. H. & J. S. Collins, Gilbert H. going east to purchase a stock of leather and saddlery goods. The same day I left Omaha for the "west," cutting across lots from Fourteenth and

Douglas streets and camping under the "Big Elms" at the Military bridge.

The Mormons on their westward march held regular Sunday services under these trees. Twenty-fourth and Cuming streets now mark the spot. Johnson's army crossed the Military bridge in 1853 to fight the Mormons at Great Salt lake.

We traveled the old Military road from Omaha. Snow and rain made the roads heavy, and travel slow, March 24th we camped at the Elkhorn river. Ferriage was fifty cents per wagon. Loose stock was led and driven. Raw Hide creek was our next camp. Pawnee Indians came down on us by the dozen. It was their custom to find emigrant camps all along the Platte, and beg. They had noses like a pointer dog. They manifested no unfriendly disposition, but showed a fondness for our tin cups, pans, knives and everything in this line they could pick up and conceal under their blankets. From the Raw Hide to Fremont, then a village of two to three hundred inhabitants, white tail deer were frequently seen in the tall grass. Between Fremont and Columbus there was very little settlement. There were only a few ranches where hay and shelter for animals could be had for fifty cents to \$1.00 per span over night.

If you did not patronize these ranches the alternative was to camp where you could and wake up in the morning to find one or two head of stock gone. This necessitated "laying over" a day or two. The stray stock was sometimes found in the corral of the ranchman with a charge of \$5.00 to \$10.00 for recovering it.

West of Columbus we crossed the Loup Fork river, full of running ice. The ferry boat had sunk and the stream was too deep and swift to ford. So all hands assisted in raising and pumping out the boat. When in running order we paid fifty cents per wagon and one span for ferrying us over. The loose stock swam. From the Loup to the

#### PLATTE CROSSING AT KEARNEY

it snowed or rained almost constantly. At every camp the Pawnees visited us. They were always hungry. They told stories of war parties out after Sioux scalps, capturing ponies, robes, furs, etc. We, having no proof to the contrary, their stories were allowed to stand. While the beggars looked fierce to us, they were as helpless as children. When we reached a point opposite Fort Kearney there were over two hundred teams in camp, waiting to decide whether they would continue their journey on the old California trail of "49" on the north side or ford the Platte and go on the south side—said to be fifty miles the shorter road. Before deciding on our route, we watched the crossing of a freight wagon loaded with grain. Twelve yoke of oxen with five drivers waded into the swift current, and were soon floundering and wallowing in the shifting quicksand. Three or four of the drivers were often up to their necks in the cold water. A rope around the waist of each, the other end fastened to an ox-yoke, prevented the drivers drifting away. If allowed to stop, the cattle would steadily sink in the shifting quicksands belly deep. To release them the quicksand had to be shoveled from below and let the

current carry it away. This one team was two hours in crossing. The ferriage for one wagon was \$6.00. After witnessing this sight, our party was not long in deciding to take the trail on the north side and cross the Platte 200 miles higher up.

We were now in the country of the hostile Sioux Indians, and it was necessary to organize our train, consisting of one hundred and six wagons and nearly one hundred and fifty men. Thomas Prowse, from Galena, Illinois, an old "49-er," was elected captain. He was a quiet, level-headed man, stern of disposition sound of judgment, and with plenty of "sand." Mounting a wagon seat he said: "All the men who go with this outfit hand in your names, and the kind of transportation you have. This will be no picnic, and I want you all to understand that every man will do his share of guard duty. Orders will be orders, and if there is a man in this crowd not willing to obey orders, now is the time for him to drop out. The train will 'roll out' at daylight tomorrow morning." The next morning promptly at daylight every team was numbered and placed in line. "Everybody will be expected to keep up and not lag behind," said the captain; "Indians always go for the last teams, and we may see plenty of them."

There was a call to know if "Jim McNear was in the train." "You bet I am here," answered Jim. "You'll find me in the Collins outfit in front, on the end of this trail, and don't you forget it." One of the men named "Chance" volunteered to go over with the freight team for mail and to post letters. This being the last opportunity we would have until reach-



ing Fort Laramie unless the "pony mail" would pick up the letters on the way east. "Chance" was to join us that night ten miles above. He would wade the Platte. Just as the train was ready to "roll," a buxom Irish girl, weighing 200 pounds, drove up to Captain Prowse in a covered wagon, with a span of good American horses and said: "Captain, I want to go wid ye. I've me own team and can take care of meself.

ME NAME'S JANE."

"All right," said the captain. "We need one woman with 150 men to bake our bread, mend our trousers, and sew buttons on." With charcoal, her wagon cover was marked "Jane," and she was assigned to a place in the middle of the train.

Leaving this camp we bade farewell to civilization to enter the country of the hostile Sioux Indians, over the dim trail made by the emigrants going to California in "Forty-nine." The trail ran over a level plain, bordered on the east by sand hills and low bluffs where the buffaloes ranged and on the west by the North Platte river. The plains were covered with dry grass, and there was no fuel for two hundred miles. It certainly was not a cheerful outlook for a lot of "green pilgrims." A mule strayed from our first noon stop and my mustang saddle pony was pressed into service where he remained until we reached Fort Laramie. The stray mule was not recovered.

We camped on Elm creek, where our man "Chance" was to join us, but he failed to come that night. We remained in camp all next day, and still no tidings

of "Chance." Out on the foot-hills a small band of buffalo was grazing. We agreed to wait one day longer for "Chance" and improve the time by hunting buffalo to supply us with fresh meat.

April 12th, at daylight, we still had no tidings of our man. With a light wagon and a span of mules, five of us, headed by Captain Prowse, and leading our saddle horses, started for the bluffs. Our object in taking a wagon served the double purpose of keeping our saddle horses fresh and to bring in the game. At the foothills the mules were unharnessed and tied to the wagon. Mounting our horses, with lariat, Winchester rifles and hunting knives, we were soon off and rode rapidly to the highest bluff two miles away where we tied the horses to sage brush, and cautiously ascended the bluffs. With field glasses we looked the country over for buffalo.

#### HERD OF BUFFALO.

A low flat, not a mile away, was alive with antelope. A band of several hundred scattered over a mile of territory and beyond them was a scattering herd of buffalo. It is not often that hunters are disgusted with the sight of an over abundance of game. This, however, was our predicament. We wanted buffalo and there they were less than two miles away. Captain Prowse was not long in deciding on a plan. If we came in sight of the antelope they would all take to their heels, alarm the buffalo, and put an end to our chances of getting a shot at them. With the wind in our favor we made a detour of five miles, keeping well out of sight, stopping occasionally to look over the

top of the bluff and locate our game. When we came in sight they were feeding through a low sag in the hills crossing a ridge. Waiting until they passed out of sight we galloped to the foot of the ridge and again dismounted and crept on hands and knees to look over the bluff. We were almost on top of fully a hundred buffalo, quietly feeding, not fifty yards away. Returning to our horses it was planned that each hunter should put the end of his lariat through the bit ring and all lead their horses abreast to the firing point. "Now down on your knee, hold fast to your horse, every man pick his buffalo and 'blaze away.' Stick to your own buffalo until he is down." Such were the orders. I obeyed all orders but one. The fusilade made all the horses plunge and rear. My mustang pulled away and, with lariat dragging, started in the direction of the antelope. They scattered like quail. Not waiting for a report on the first round of fire, as it involved a possibility of losing my horse entirely, and walking ten miles to camp, I followed the mustang. It was not long until I saw the hunters headed for the bluffs with the wagon to bring in the game. Tired out, and disgusted with my part in the hunt, I kept on after my pony. One of the hunters came to my relief and soon caught him. My revenge on his conduct was to ride him on a dead run until there was not much "go" left in either the pony or the rider.

The result of the hunt was three buffalo and three antelope killed on the way home. It was sundown when we were well on the way back and the party did not reach camp until midnight. Up to the present

date I fail to realize any great pleasure or sport in my first buffalo hunt. The lost man "Chance" had reached camp at noon, footsore, and with hands and face bleeding from cuts from the sharp blades of grass. He told a most pitiful story. The first day he walked until dark then lay down on the ground for a long night's dread of Indians. The second day, believing the train was still ahead, he traveled until noon and then retraced his steps. Seeing our wagon on high ground going to the bluffs, he concluded we were in camp somewhere on Elm creek. Here he waded and swam the Platte and followed the creek to our camp. He had eaten nothing in the two days but a rabbit and a prairie dog, killed with rocks. Afraid of Indians he did not light a fire and ate them raw.

April 13th we drove twenty-two miles. There was no wood. Our only fuel was buffalo chips. The next day we drove thirty miles. A lodge of Indians came to us, armed only with bows and arrows. They were friendly and hungry, and left us after supper.

April 15th we started at daylight and discovered a dense smoke to the north. It was a prairie fire ten miles away. The captain ordered halt, and calling all hands around him, he said: "If the wind changes and that fire comes this way, we must work fast or we are 'goners.'" Half an hour brought us to a marsh and a small lake. We made camp between them. It was lively work corralling the wagons, "close up," and chaining them together. The stock was driven inside, and the entrance was closed up and securely chained. Every man took a bucket and a grain sack, and under the orders of Captain Prowse began

"BACK FIRING,"

by dropping a lighted match in the dry grass, and putting out the fire before it got beyond control, and then beginning in a new place, repeating the operation over and over again, with a bucket of water always near by to keep the bag wet. In an hour's time several acres were burned over, all around us. Even "Jane" did her share of work, carrying water to the men. It was fast and strenuous work and was finished none too soon to avoid a most serious disaster. Soon the wind changed as the captain predicted. The blaze was in sight, coming toward us with a speed of a race horse. It was a line of fire a mile long, coming like a great wave, at times leaping fifty feet in the air. The roar, hissing and cracking of the flames could be heard a mile away. Deer, rabbits and prairie dogs swept through our camp in great fright. The sight was grand and awful. When the flame reached the head of the lake north of us a quarter of a mile away, we could feel the heat. It was almost stifling. At this point the fire stopped. We had "back fired" a quarter of a mile along its edge. Fearing that when the tall grass in the marsh was reached the falling embers would set fire to our wagon covers, McNear fired the marsh before the main flame reached it. During the excitement the stock bellowed and brayed like wild beasts. Soon the two waves of fire met, and the smoke was so blinding that we were compelled to throw ourselves flat on the ground until it passed over. When the fire had passed and gone around us, the men were called together to ascertain if everybody was accounted for. All stood alongside their wagons and answered

to their names. What became of the Indians mattered little to us. They are generally equal to such occasions and may have gone into the river for safety.

We resumed our march on April 17th. For miles and miles the bleached heads and bones of buffalo showed plainly on the sea of burnt ground. Many snakes and small animals were found partly burned. The air was dense with floating ashes. We moved to a spot near the Platte where a guard was organized of every man in the train. McNear was chosen captain of the guard. With nearly 150 men the duty of standing guard three hours at night fell upon each one lightly. There were three shifts of four men each which made guard duty come but once a week. Snow and hail fell the entire night. The stock was restless and kept the guard busy driving picket pins. Owing to the many delays we fed half the usual ration of grain to our animals.

In crossing North Bluff creek, the next day, we broke two wagons, and the train went into camp near the foot of a sand bluff for repairs. Here a lone Indian came to us with jaded ponies, bow and arrows, and a hungry look. He was the first Indian we met that seemed to have any business except to clean out our larder. His story was that twelve Sioux had raided a camp of Pawnees south of the Platte; eleven were killed, all their stock was taken and he alone had escaped. By signs he made us understand that our road for a short distance would be level, and then leave the river and cross a sand bluff and be "one sleep" without wood, water or grass; then back to the river, and in sight of Chimney Rock on the south

side. He also gave us the cheerful news that war parties of Sioux were out and we must look out for our stock. After supper he left us.

#### A WHITE MAN SCALPED.

Before reaching the sand bluffs we had evidence that our Indian guest knew the condition of affairs. One of our men, who had gone ahead, came upon the body of a white man scalped and with an arrow half through his body.\* On the trail we found a partly burned wagon, parts of harness, empty fruit cans, etc., and the remnants of a camp fire. Later it was learned that two men and one woman had traveled alone in this outfit. At this camp they were attacked at night. The woman was carried off alive by the Indians. One man was killed, and the other escaped by hiding in the grass and wading the Platte. Going over the sand bluffs our wagons sunk to the hub. All day we wallowed through by doubling teams on every wagon. We traveled very slowly. Night found us still in the sand with no wood, water or grass. We tied our stock up to the wagons and they gnawed at the wagon bows and covers all night.

April 19th our route was still over the sand and again down along the Platte in sight of Chimney Rock. There was no fuel except weeds and buffalo chips. It rained and snowed the entire day. The next three days we camped in sight of Ancient bluffs. Owing to the heavy rain and snow and the howling of wolves and coyotes

---

\*This arrow is in the author's possession.

## OUR ENTIRE HERD STAMPEDED

at night, jerking their picket pins and sending them flying through the air, at the end of lariats, spinning like tops. "Mustang" and two or three other head were always picketed near the tents. The whole herd came through the camp like an avalanche. Hearing the clatter of hoofs McNear rushed for the mustang, pulled up his picket pin and in his night clothes and bare feet, mounted him bareback and drifted with the herd. "Long Jim" of the Missouri crowd, and "Chance" each caught a mule, mounted, and away they went in the midst of the runaway herd. The night was as black as ink.

April 21st, when morning came there was not a hoof of stock in sight and three men gone. Two or three drivers set out on foot to assist in recovering the stock. How far or how long the herd would go, no one could tell. At noon McNear reported, leading half a dozen head, and said the entire herd was coming on.

April 23rd we drove to a stockade where a half-breed kept a store of blankets and goods for trading with the Indians for buffalo robes, otter and beaver skins. Twelve lodges of Sioux were camped about the stockade. Here we remained two days and sent a messenger on to old Fort Laramie with letters to mail. This was our first post office since leaving Columbus, Nebraska, a distance of nearly four hundred miles.

April 25th we crossed the Platte, at the mouth of the Laramie river, two miles from the post. Again our man "Chance" distinguished himself. A "devil



may-care" fellow that was always ready to take the brunt of anything that offered a spice of danger, into the river he plunged and the next moment he and pony were floundering in the quicksand. All teams crossed without accident.

#### AT FORT LARAMIE.

April 26th Lieutenant-Colonel Collins, of the 11th Ohio, was in command at Fort Laramie. The troops were known as "galvanized" confederate soldiers, captured by the federals and sent west for lack of prison room. Here we met Jim Bridger, the scout, forty-two years of whose life were spent on the plains and in the mountains, and who married a Flat-head squaw. Bridger was organizing a train to open up a new route to the gold fields via the Big Horn mountains. He was continually annoyed by the foolish questions of the pilgrims. While I was talking to him about his new route one of the "Ten strike" "butted in" with the question, "Mr. Bridger, how long have you bin in this kentry?" Pointing to Laramie Peak, in the range of mountains forty miles away, without cracking a smile or a twinkle in his keen gray eyes, he answered: "Stranger, d'ye see that high mountain over in the range yonder? Well, when I first kem to this kentry, that mountain was a hole in the ground."

Little did I dream while looking over this, the first frontier military post I had ever visited, that it would fall my lot to ever set my eyes on it again. In 1872 I went to this same old post as post-trader, ap-

pointed by President Grant, and remained there until about 1882.

Near the crossing one of our pilgrims discovered a tent with a sign board daubed in wagon grease, "Post Office." "Letters to the states 50 cents." Two "Johnnies-come lately" had set up a tent, cut a slit in a board large enough to pass a silver dollar, laid this across a barrel, into which they dropped half a dollar for each letter delivered. While waiting to have letters checked off and the mail "made up" a rider mounted on a cayuse pony would ride up in great haste and call for "mail," saying, "Can't wait," "behind time," etc. He had just come out of the river wet to the back. When the bag of mail was handed out he was off to ride further down the Platte, dump the mail into the river, turn his pony out and wait for the arrival of the next train of pilgrims. Sergeant Snyder at Fort Laramie said "It was nothing but a 'dam schwindle,' but dey made a pushel o' money mit it."

When we arrived at Fort Laramie an officious young lieutenant, by name Pettyjohn, was officer of the day. Whether from a sense of duty or natural curiosity, he fished out of our wagon an old army musket that McNear had been allowed to carry home when discharged from the army; he arrested Jim and took him before the commanding officer for having government property in his possession. Jim's honest face and short speech to the officer resulted in the lieutenant being ordered to return the weapon and, turning to Jim, he said: "I hope this old gun may be of good service to you in case you need it to fight Indians."

Leaving Fort Laramie, April 27th, by mistake we followed the road to the government saw mill near Laramie Peak and drove as far as Little Cottonwood before discovering our error. Captain Prowse and McNear with saddle horses followed the road a few miles and satisfying themselves that we were on the wrong trail returned, and we drove across the prairie to the Platte road.\* From here the road was over rolling hills and our progress was slow.

May 1st we camped on Labonte creek, where, in 1886, I established a cattle ranch.

May 4th we were at Fort Fetterman, where there were more "galvanized" soldiers. The credulous McNear gave away all the onions and potatoes in our larder to soldiers on their plea "that they would all die of scurvy if they did not get some vegetables soon."

#### POISON SPRINGS.

Beyond Fetterman was Poison Springs. The banks of the stream were strewn with bones and carcasses of animals dead from drinking the alkali water. During the hot months it was so strong with alkali that after boiling coffee it was most disagreeable to taste. At this point we saw the stump of a telegraph pole cut by the Indians. They had camped here during a heavy rain and thunderstorm. To get dry wood to start a fire an Indian with his tomahawk went to the pole and began chopping off chips. Lightning struck the pole and killed the Indian. This is given as a rea-

---

\*The writer still has in his possession a jar of stones collected on this trip including one with the date cut with a pen-knife while waiting.

son why Indians never after molested a telegraph pole. They counted it "bad medicine."

May 7th we were at the first crossing of the Sweetwater near Independence Rock and Devil's Gate. Near by were alkali or soda lakes. The banks were white as snow and the soda lay inches deep. We used it in making bread and found it almost equal to baking powder. I waded through the walls of rock between which the stream ran, the road running to the south and around it. I saw many names painted and carved on the rocks—some dating 1847 and 1849. Here a detachment of cavalry came to our camp with orders to arrest our train and return it to Fort Laramie. It developed that one of the men in our train had purchased government corn from a soldier. To settle it the party gave the sergeant a few cans of fruit, supposing that would be the end.

May 10th we camped at the third crossing of the Sweetwater, being detained by rain and snow. Just as we were leaving at noon Captain Marshall an officer and twenty mounted men, rode into camp, and inquired for the captain of our train. When Captain Prowse was pointed out the officer said: "I am ordered to return Captain Prowse's train to Fort Laramie." This was on account of the "corn deal," which it was thought, had been settled. After a lot of argument and dickering, in which every owner of a team or teams took part, McNear addressed the officer: "Captain, look here, I just come out of one war, and aint looking for another. You can read this paper, (handing him his discharge from the United States Army.) I don't know nothing about your business, but Mr. Col-

lins owns six teams in this train, that is ready to pull out, and *we* are going *west*. If you have any business with anybody in Captain Prowse's train you better pick out your man. Here's where *we* leave the train." Without further ceremony McNear mounted the lead wagon, took the reins and ordered "the Collins' outfit to come on." By this time the "corn man" came to the front and began his story. To hold a conversation privately the captain took him behind a bunch of rocks. In less than ten minutes, the captain rode out in pompous style, straightened up in his saddle, and ordered his men to "right wheel, forward march," and they rode off like the soldiers who "first rode up the hill, then rode down again." The only question to the whole affair was: What induced the captain to disobey his orders to return the train to Fort Laramie?

May 11th we were in sight of snow on the Rocky mountains. This was at the fifth crossing of the Sweetwater. A detachment of soldiers from Fort Laramie had been stationed here to look out for deserters. The day before our arrival all the soldiers, including the sergeant, deserted, taking horses, equipments, guns, ammunition and blankets.

May 13th we began the ascent to South Pass, and at 10 a. m. reached Fort Casper, an abandoned log house on the side of the mountain, where a few soldiers wintered in 1863. At this point our train divided, part going via Fort Bridger and Soda Springs, our part of the train going by the way of "Lander's cut-off." The ascent to South Pass was so gradual that we scarcely knew when the summit was passed.

May 15th we camped at the foot of the western slope on the Big Sandy. Here we caught our first trout. We had some difficulty in going down the west slope of the Rocky mountains. All the streams on the west slope abounded in trout.

#### GREEN RIVER.

May 16th we drove to the first fork of Green river. The water was deep and the current swift. The "character" of our train was "Chance," the easy-going "devil-may-care" fellow who never shirked. It was a precaution to test the current and depths of streams always before attempting to cross. After digging away ten foot of bank to drive to the water safely, a volunteer was called for. "Give me your mustang," said "Chance," "and if I live through it, you fellows come on with your wagons." At the first dash "Chance" and his pony went out of sight, and came to the surface twenty feet below sputtering and spouting like a whale. "It's deep there; better come down easy," said "Chance." All of the wagon beds were blocked up to the top of their side standards and lashed down to their running gear. A rope was tied to the rear axle of each wagon manned by a dozen men, eased down by a like number, and when afloat, to hold it from drifting down the current, another rope was attached to the tongue and carried between the lead mules, handled by a crew of twelve on the opposite shore. When the lead mules were out of sight under water, with the aid of the rope the men on the west shore hauled them to a sand bar where they found footing. The leaders towed the wheelers along to the sand bar,

and the wagon followed to shore in safety. As I had traveled two-thirds of the distance from Omaha *on foot*, it did not occur to me that I would be called upon to mount the high seat and drive my four-mule team the first through the only dangerous crossing we had met. The driver of this team had been called back to look after the loose stock and there was no one else to drive. When Captain Prowse, in a tone of voice that appeared to have a business ring, said, "Get up and tackle it, Collins," there was nothing else to do. "Can't I ride with you, Mr. Collins? I'm scared of them low wagons." This was the voice of "Jane" and she climbed upon the seat beside me. The leaders went over their heads the first plunge. The men at the rear with ropes let the wagon down easy, pushing the wheelers in up to their backs. Then came the wagon. When it reached five feet of water it floated and toppled with the current. At this point, where all the skill of a driver was needed as well as any "grain" of "sand" he might possess, "Jane" came over onto me, grabbing and scrambling to keep from falling off. We landed safely and this same process was used in crossing every wagon in the train. Few travelers in these days would attempt so hazardous a crossing. With us it was a ground hog case. Hard work, level heads, and good judgment carried every team over safely.

May 17th we drove eight miles and crossed the second fork of Green river with less difficulty than the first.

May 18th we drove twelve miles and camped on the third fork. Here we caught mountain trout. At the fourth fork we camped near a grave. The head-

board bore the inscription: "Martin Moran, killed by Indians in 1862." (Digger Indians.) This was near the foot of Wind River mountains. Driving five miles farther we camped in a canyon. It snowed all night.

SNOW EIGHT FEET DEEP.

May 21st the snow continued. We were unable to travel over three miles this day, the trail being almost impassable. During this short drive we dug out snow eight feet deep for fifty feet and camped at Fort Snyder—a log cabin where a few soldiers camped the summer previous. One of our party with a saddle-horse took the trail ahead and returning reported forty teams and a hundred men working their way through twenty miles of snow two to three feet deep. This was "Lander's cut-off," and we were five days digging our way through snow. Two days we drove our animals back five to eight miles to the nearest grass. Three days we fed them flour out of our provision supply. We had fed out all our grain.

May 26th we came to the camp where forty teams ahead of us had just left. It was a sight. Empty wagons, barrels, kegs, boxes, chairs, stoves, and everything of weight or bulk that could be dispensed with, had been left on the ground and abandoned to enable the party to move through the snow and mud. All they took with them was packed on their animals, and on one loaded wagon.

May 27th found our train still tugging up the mountain side, doubling teams, unloading and carrying on our backs sacks of flour, grain and boxes of



canned goods. At times a heavy wagon would have forty head of horses and mules and a driver to each span moving very slowly. At 7 p. m. the wagons were from one-half to three miles apart. There was no cooked food and many of us were without tent or bed. One of my own teams, just at the top of the mountain, was actually *buried* in eight feet of snow. We passed a very uncomfortable night on the mountain. The snow was crusted over. At 4 a. m., May 28th, the wagons were taken over the crust until the sun made it soft and then the digging and pulling began again. We finally overtook the parties ahead of us. They were still overloaded and I purchased several bags of sugar, at forty-five cents per pound, and canned peaches at \$13.00 per dozen from the owner of the wagon.

"Jane" had a tough time while we were crossing over the mountains through the snow. No one paid much attention to her after she had been told to remain in her wagon and we would see her safely through. She was always good natured and through all the difficulties sat in her wagon like a statue.

May 29th was our first day out of the mountains and away from the snow in eight days. We camped on Salt river, near Salt springs.

When we nooned before reaching Salt creek a spirit of adventure seized upon me and on foot I followed a game trail across a plateau with some misgivings that I might not overtake the train until they camped some twelve miles ahead. The road made an ox bow over a rough road of boulders and I took the short cut to rest from riding.

After walking about five miles, I sat down on a rock on a barren flat and picked up a copper coin dated 1759. I did not overtake the train until they camped.

I recently came across this copper coin, and thinking of its date and the circumstance of finding it forty years ago out in a wild Indian country, entitled it to some value; I sent it to a New York expert on coins for his judgment. I was not a little surprised when he replied, "It is a Swedish coin and not worth a penny."\*

May 30th we drove to Blackfoot creek by noon. This was at the junction of Sublet cutoff and the Soda Springs road. Several lodges of Blackfoot Indians were camped here fishing. For a tin cup of flour they would exchange a string of trout a yard long. A cup of sugar would take the catch of half a dozen Indian boys who were better fishermen than the men. Trout was so abundant that the water was in a constant ripple.

#### SNAKE RIVER.

June 3rd we reached Snake river—Harry Richards and Massa's Rope Ferry. We paid \$3.00 each for crossing the wagons. The stock swam. The owners of the ferry and their men quietly sat on the bank and watched the men in our train do all the work in crossing. The forty teams ahead of us were taken across before our train. All the way from Kearney west, just behind my last team, had followed a span of mules,

---

\*This coin is still in the possession of the author.

with a single wagon carrying ten long, lank Missouri corn crackers with their beds and provisions. If they ever possessed a name, it was not divulged on the trip. They were dubbed "Long Jim" and the "Ten Strike." The one reason for taking them in at Kearney was that so many men with only one span of mules to look after gave us nine extra men to help out in a pinch.

When the crossing of teams began here the "Ten Strike" left their position in the train and pulled in ahead of my wagon, No. 4. Apparently no attention was paid to this, the first breach in our discipline, but it did not escape the eagle eye of McNear. It was a rainy, drizzly day, and everybody was out of humor. After all the wagons were crossed and were safe in camp, and our tents up, we were eating supper. It was noticed that something was "out of joint" in McNear's mind, and he was "wool gathering." He placed his tin plate and cup on the ground, stood up and shook himself out, then said: "Now, if we'uns want to see some fun, come with me." "What's up, Jim?" I asked. "Did you see the 'Ten Strike' pull in ahead of our No. 4 in crossing? I m going over to their tent and clean out the whole d——d outfit." Jim was as mild a mannered man as "ever scuttled ship." He would serve one man as faithfully as another, but anything that had a semblance of unfairness would not "go down" with him. He would fight wild cats if he were right. It took no little persuading to keep him from his purpose. I finally said to him, "It is less than three days to the end of our journey, and we have had no 'scraps.' Don't you think it a little late to

begin now?" "All right," said Jim, "let it go." That ended it.

On the opposite bank was a camp of Bannock Indians, cooking their mixed meal of flour and water in a basket. Stones were heated and placed in the basket, and this repeated until the meal was cooked.

June 6th we drove twenty-nine miles. We halted at a dry camp—no wood, water or grass. Animals that were tied up at night to the wagon wheels gnawed and destroyed what was left of the wagon covers. The only fuel was buffalo chips. Here we came onto the "49" wagon trail leading to California and also to Salt Lake and it was fairly bristling with pack animals, twenty-span California mule teams and wagons with trails loaded as heavy as twelve thousand pounds to a team. The twenty mules were driven by one man, riding the "near" wheel mule, and using a single "jerk" line running to the bit of the lead mule, thus guiding the entire team. One jerk of the line was "gee," two jerks "haw," etc. The plains around us were strewn with the heads and bleached bones of buffalo killed by Indians.

A few hours' drive carried us through Pleasant Valley and over gentle rolling grass-covered hills and across the continental divide the second time to the eastern slope. From the foot of the eastern slope we rumbled along through a rocky canyon, at the mouth of which we found a toll gate and a western character, with slouch hat, buckskin trousers and shirts, and with the regular "six shooter" and belt of ammunition strapped upon him. With these accompaniments he collected our last toll of \$1.50 for each wagon. Our

mounted men drove the loose stock around the gate and over a rocky hill, thereby saving toll. With the exchange of a few choice western epithets between the man at the gate and the men driving stock the latter were soon out of sight over the hill and the incident was closed.

#### IN SIGHT OF VIRGINIA CITY.

June 11th we camped on the Stinking Water river—so called from the buffalo herds dying there from a disease in a severe winter years before—and within a short day's drive of Virginia City, the famous gold field. We had left the Missouri river eighty-one days before.

On the morning of Sunday, June 12th, 1864, we were in camp in sight of Virginia City. There being no grass or camping grounds nearer than two or three miles our stock was turned out on the hills in charge of herders. We had reached our last camp. The balance of the day was spent in bathing in a stream, washing our clothing, baking bread, and a general overhauling of wagons, preparatory to entering the city in decent order the next day, and here our train disbanded.

I walked over to Virginia City to look at the town. All the stores were filled with miners buying their week's provisions. Counting freight from the Missouri river, flour was considered low at \$35.00 for a bag of 96 pounds; coal oil, \$4.00 to \$6.00 a gallon; candles, 50 cents a pound; sugar, 50 cents; coffee, \$1.00; a hickory axe handle, \$3.00; an axe, \$2.00; etc. The gambling rooms and saloons were running "full

blast," bands were playing, men and women were running all the gambling devices known to a mining camp, to separate the miner, the merchant and the pilgrim from his money. Great stacks of gold and silver coin lay on every table, and the rooms were filled with a motley set of humanity. The streets were crowded with people. Half a dozen horse auctions were going on. Every counter had its gold scales, and every man his buckskin bag of gold dust. There was the rough miner in slouch hat, woolen shirt and trousers bulged out at the pockets with bags of "dust." His hair and whiskers were long and filled with dirt. There was the gambler in broadcloth, a broad rimmed black hat, a "boiled shirt," with a diamond as large as a hazel nut. There were women gamblers, be-roused and bedecked with paint, diamonds galore, dressed in black satin or gay colored silk dresses. "Hurdy-Gurdy" dances held sway in the dance halls, where any man could engage a partner for half a pennyweight in "dust," and pay the barkeeper the same for drinks for himself and partner, "one turn." Greenbacks passed current for only fifty cents on the dollar. The medium was "gold dust" at \$18.00 an ounce. Two banks bought gold dust at the same rate, and paid for it in drafts on New York, for the merchants and miners were always sending away money. Sunday was pay day, when the bosses met all their men at their cabins, built of logs, and weighed out the bright new dust just out of the ground they had worked in. From \$5.00 to \$8.00 per day was paid to laborers, and \$10.00 a day to good drifters. Earlier in the season occasionally a drunken ruffian would ride his horse into a saloon, and begin

shooting the heads off the bottles, with a revolver (everybody carried a revolver)—and breaking the mirrors to “smithereens.” The proprietor dare not interfere, not knowing who the offender’s friends might be that were in the crowd. It seemed the very off-scourings of creation were there. Men were robbed and murdered for their money. There was a reign of terror that made every man feel that his life was in danger.

“VIGILANCE COMMITTEE.”

Finally in the early spring the best element organized a “vigilance committee” and began rounding up the desperadoes. Pickets surrounded the town one night and when they closed in dozens of the men wanted were in the drag net. The committee sat all night behind closed doors. About daylight the culprits were brought before them and in less than an hour sentences were passed. Many were “banished,” and many were to be hanged. About daylight that morning some of them were dangling from the frames of unfinished buildings on Main street. At one point, five were hanged at one time. The good work went on. The country was scoured for one hundred miles around. The men who were guilty were hanged wherever found. During the following six months, nearly one hundred outlaws had paid the penalty and the morals of the community began to improve. The only mistakes were made in banishing some who should have been hanged. For thieving the penalty was forty lashes on the bare back.

My cabin was half way between Virginia City and

the little town of Nevada. Two months after my arrival imagine my surprise one night on hearing the heavy tramp of men near my cabin. Mr. McNear was sleeping on the ground near me and could not resist an investigation. In a few moments he returned with this bit of news; "The vigilantes have got our man 'Chance, the Mermaid,' tied to the whipping post, and are giving him the limit, forty lashes!"

Poor "Chance!" He had stolen tools from a miner's cabin, and was paying the penalty. He was a better man on the plains than in the wild gold camp. On the long tedious trip no one had complained of a fault, and for the good there was in him he was duly credited.

\* \* \*

### NOTES BY THE WAY.

The Indians along the Platte, as far as Kearney, were Pawnees and had few fire-arms. Bows and arrows were used in killing buffalo. The Pawnees roamed as far south as the Republican river, where they frequently met the Sioux, who were always ready for war. From Fort Kearney north and west to the Sweetwater the Sioux claimed the country. West of them was the Shoshone, or Snake tribe, as far as Snake river, then came the Blackfeet and Flatheads, their country reaching west and north of the Snake. After leaving Fort Kearney, it was dangerous to travel in small parties until reaching Snake river. The Sioux were in an ugly mood. When they came to our camp, we scarcely knew whether it was to look us over, ex-



pecting to return at daylight and attack us, or not. We were afraid to treat them unfriendly and hence we submitted to their impudence and impositions. Small outfits ahead of us were frequently attacked and trains that followed had exciting stories to relate of their continual annoyance by the Sioux. When no Indians were seen the sign was ominous. While in sight it was easy to watch their movements. There was always great danger in the country of the Sioux.

At Fort Laramie we were greatly surprised at the number of well dressed squaws about the post. The half breed children showed the "early settlement of the country by whites." Indians were allowed to trade at Fort Laramie then. In these days of the buffalo the Indians wore these robes around them. Very little was known about ("Mazaska") money. It was barter and trade. A dressed buffalo hide was valued at \$2.00 to \$5.00. A pony was worth \$25.00 to \$50.00 in buffalo robes at the above prices. Great stress was laid on white buffalo—white on the hump and down on the shoulders. On their hunts a party would abandon a herd and chase a white buffalo all day in preference. It was "great medicine," and a white robe was "trade" for twenty-five to fifty ordinary robes. The "beaver" or "silk" robes, come from the mountain buffalo, or bison, that ranged only in the mountain country. They were smaller, the hair being shorter and more even in length, and were generally killed in their best seasons, while the Indians were hunting elk and deer. I saw a bison hide freshly killed, dropped from a hunter's pack animal. The hunter told me it was a "bison," and sometimes called beaver or silk robe. We could "swap"

a sack of flour for a pony and the Indian would then steal the pony before next daylight.

\* \* \*

### **A FRESH KILLED MOOSE.**

In the winter of '65 and '66 I sold goods at Silver Bow. Thirty miles southwest, towards Deer Lodge river, gold was discovered by a party of German prospectors and the place was called German Gulch. If there is any one thing more than another, that will create excitement among miners it is the vague news that "new diggins" have been struck. The farther away they are the more eagerly miners and others will follow them. Curiosity prompted me to ride over and look at the situation—only thirty miles away. I made the trip and return between "sun and sun." As I rode down the mountain side a party of miners gathered around a fresh killed moose, which had come down the mountains in the night, and in passing through the camp and crossing a drain ditch, fell in. The ditch was too narrow and deep for him to climb out, and, being cross timbered, he could neither travel up nor down. In the morning when the miners came to work they found him cavorting around the narrow space. A rope was thrown over his horns and he was dragged up to the surface. His first move was to "charge" the crowd. The man at the end of the rope ran around a tree and the moose followed until he wound himself around the tree when he was killed with

an axe. I arrived in time to see them take his hide off, and, with wooden pegs, pin it on the ground to dry.

\* \* \*

### A RICH CLEAN-UP.

Confederate Gulch was about thirty miles from Helena. Shallow placer diggings were discovered there in 1865. It was more profitable to "ground sluice" with hose; cut the banks away by a stream of water through a hose and nozzle, and carry all the dirt through sluice boxes, than by any other process, working the bed as well as the side of the gulch. This kept two crews of thirty men each working day and night. No "clean up" was made until the end of three weeks, then all the sluices were cleaned and the false bottoms taken up. The flour gold was caught with quicksilver, the coarse gold was panned out, and put in gold pans set along in a double row on the ground. Each pan was filled to the brim, a gold pan holding about two gallons. Except for its bright, rich, yellow color, the gold resembled corn meal. This was the "clean up," and like myself, many others thought it of enough consequence to carry a blanket behind their saddle, take along some "grub" and ride horseback thirty miles to witness it. One hundred and seventy-two thousand dollars in clean, bright gold dust was the result. Such a sight had never before been seen and possibly may never be again.

**FAST STAGING.**

A. J. Oliver ran a daily stage line from Virginia City to Helena in '65. I was buying gold dust in the banking house of Nowlan & Weary and acted as Mr. Oliver's agent. When the stampede to Helena on the Prickly Pear gulch began I was sent to Helena to open a branch bank. Wells, Fargo & Company also ran a stage line to Helena with Concord stages and first class equipment. The Oliver line utilized ranches along the road for stations for changing horses, about every twelve to sixteen miles. The horses, principally cayuses, ran loose on the prairie, few of them being broken to harness. Six horses was a "change team." The wheelers and leaders were partly broken to harness and for the "swing" or middle span wild cayuses were caught up and put in—that had never known a harness. With the wheelers pushing them and the leaders dragging them there was nothing left for them but to go along. In the early winter of '65 I took the Oliver line at Virginia City at 4 a. m., and just as the sun went down I was at Helena, 145 miles away. That night I rented a window space ten feet square for \$100.00 per month. The next morning I took the stage at 4 o'clock and in the evening was at Virginia City—145 miles again. That night I gathered an armful of stationery and at 4 the next morning started for Helena, arriving there about sundown, making three trips in three successive days of 145 miles each—435 miles. In the three days' travel I had slept not to exceed ten hours out of the seventy-two. By 10 a. m. the fourth day I was ready for business and began buying gold dust. My

stationery and gold scales I could carry in an ordinary valise.

\* \* \*

Half a mile out of Helena, on the regular stage road, stands a scraggy pine tree called Hangman's Tree where half a dozen tough characters were hanged from time to time by "Vigilantes."

\* \* \*

### **THE GOLD MINERS' MARKET.**

A meat market in Virginia City made a wonderful display on Christmas, 1864. To keep within bounds, I can safely say there were half a dozen freshly killed buffalo and as many buffalo calves, a dozen mountain sheep, a dozen each elk, deer and antelope, half a dozen mountain lions, two mountain bison, half a dozen grizzly bears, weighing six hundred to a thousand pounds each, and as many small black bears, sage, grouse and willow or sharp-tail without number. In addition to all this there was a larger display of fine steer beef than I have ever seen in an Omaha market.

\* \* \*

### **A MOUNTAIN SHEEP HEAD.**

In February, '66, I loaded one of my four-mule teams with provisions and started for Silver Bow to "open a store." My stock consisted of a few bags of flour, worth \$45.00 for 98 pounds, canned goods, ba-

con, sugar, coffee, gold pans, picks and shovels, the latter selling in Virginia City for "one ounce" (\$18.00) each. The one wagon load was worth considerable "dust." The ground was covered with snow, the streams were frozen over and the mercury marked twenty-five below zero. One man accompanied me. As he had spent the night before in a dance hall his services were not of much account. I knew, however, that a day out in the cold would sober him up and as no one else was available I took him along. We crossed the Jefferson, one of the three forks of the Missouri river and drove to the foot of the main range of the Rocky mountains. The snow increased, so did the wind. When we unhitched and tied the mules to the wagon at night a regular "blizzard" struck us. There was no water and as the only fuel in sight was green willows we could not build a fire to melt snow or warm by. Under the wagon bows, covered by canvas, we lay down on a mattress on top of the barrels and boxes after a supper of frozen canned peaches, cold bacon and crackers and worried through until daylight. The divide was so gradual in crossing the mountains that we had no trouble on this account. The snow had drifted as high as the wagon bows and we had to shovel our way through. At the top of the mountain a ranchman named McCarty had built a good house of logs and here we took shelter. In front of the cabin were two logs set in the ground, with a cross log laid on, to hitch horses to. In the middle of this top log was the head of a mountain sheep. Part of the skull and one horn had been grown over so that one horn and part of the skull

was all that could be seen. The ranchman told me when he found this head it was thirty feet above the ground. His theory was that the sheep stood on ten or more feet of snow, and in rubbing his head, got one horn fast around the tree, and could not free himself. There he died. All his bones lay at the foot of the tree, and from its growth it was presumed that he got caught in this predicament some twenty years before. This identical skull and horns, with a part of the tree, can at this date, January, 1904, be seen at the Union Pacific headquarters in Omaha. Near this ranch I found a pair of "locked" deer horns. Two bucks in fighting had gotten their horns locked so they could not separate and they died there. Their bones were lying near the horns.



# **TWO THOUSAND MILES IN AN OPEN BOAT**

**FROM FORT BENTON TO OMAHA.**

In the fall of '66, miners and others who had a "home stake" and wanted to carry their gold dust to the "states," found it difficult to get transportation. The Indians had run off Wells, Fargo & Company's stage horses between Salt Lake and Denver and the "road agents" were "busy" holding up stages and robbing passengers between Virginia City and Salt Lake. All the steamboats had left Fort Benton early in July. After that water on Deadman's Rapids was so low that navigation was practically suspended. The only alternative was to embark from Fort Benton in small boats. With my father, who had come out the year before, we left Virginia City the morning of August 29th, with our own teams, carrying sixty passengers for Fort Benton. The first day on the road a four-mule team turned out and passed us on a dead run. Besides the driver there were six men, all tough looking characters, armed with rifles and pistols. They all hung their heads as they passed us. With my teams were four men, late members of the vigilantes, who recognized two of the men the vigilantes had banished from Virginia City two years before. It was generally believed that every man leaving for the "states" at that season of the year carried with him a "home stake" of gold dust and this episode aroused



the suspicion of all my passengers, especially that of the four vigilantes. One of two things was cock sure, either the strangers followed our party to rob us or to kill the vigilantes. Fifty thousand dollars in gold dust or the lives of four men was the stake. When we drove to Dearborn river we camped in the open, near a cut bank and slept with our clothes on. The guard was doubled and the order was given to graze the stock until dark and then tie every animal to the wagon. When the men on guard came in at midnight they reported seeing four mounted men leading two horses saddled, crossing the river, about three hundred yards below and stopping in a clump of trees near the bank. The strategy of McNear was to at once build fires and let them know our camp was alive and that they had been discovered. There was no more sleep in camp the rest of that night.

One of our men crept down under the river bank within fifty yards of the strangers and saw them dismount, then suddenly get on their horses, and scurry away to the south. Had they been friendly travelers they would have ridden into camp and made themselves known. Nothing more was seen of them and we arrived at Fort Benton without further incident.

My father, E. A. Collins, and myself purchased two boats, each thirty feet long and six feet wide, named respectively "Cora Bray" and "The Hulk." The latter because of its unwieldiness. Each boat carried twelve passengers. They were built by Bill Bivins, who later became a notorious robber and desperado and who some years later was balked in trying to rob my store

at Fort Laramie. He has since served a term in the Wyoming penitentiary.

Jim McNear, than whom no more faithful companion ever drew the breath of life, shipped as my "skipper." My father was in charge of the second boat with ten other passengers and their baggage. We were ready to leave Fort Benton on September 1st. I was custodian of a wooden soap box that contained eighty pounds of gold dust and gold nuggets. At midnight, before embarking, McNear carried this on board and placed it in the bow, which was decked over. He slept on board that night. Until reaching Sioux City no one knew that this gold dust was on board. Our expectation was to float down the river. For three days we were in swift water and made good headway. Then the river widened out and there was no perceptible current. This day one of our best oarsmen fell overboard. The second night after he raved with mountain fever. The great inconvenience we suffered from this incident cannot be imagined or described. There was no physician nearer than Fort Berthold, over a hundred miles below at the mouth of the Yellowstone. On the fourth day ice froze on the edges and not wanting to take chances of being frozen in and wintering in that country we landed, and all hands set to work making oars out of young ash trees. Each oar when finished weighed fifty to sixty pounds. A rowing crew was organized. Each man rowed every other half hour a day, and when we ran at night, three hours for each man every other night was his task. Occasionally we passed a military post, which would fire a cannon shot and round us into a landing.

The officer would inform us where hostile Indians were camped and not permit us to leave until one hundred men were together. Boats were so numerous that one day's delay sufficed. Hostile Indians usually camped in a sharp bend of the river where the current set near the bank on their shore. We made runs past these bends in the night. With such precaution, the entire trip of twenty-one hundred miles was made without being attacked, although boats ahead and behind us dodged arrows frequently.

#### FLOATING MEAT MARKET.

With our fleet of boats that left the last military landing was a small scow with three men and with a light load they could easily pull away from us. Two of the men would go ashore and hunt across the bends and drag their game to the bank beyond, the man with the scow would land and pick them up with the game they had killed, consisting of elk and deer and occasionally a buffalo and mountain sheep. They supplied our party with fresh game. Buffalo at two dollars for a quarter, elk one dollar, deer fifty cents. While the fleet of boats remained near each other there was a good demand for all the game they killed and they would earn two or three dollars a day per man. It was rather an amusing sight to see the little craft pull along side a boat, unload a quarter of game, weigh out the gold dust from the buyer, and go on to the next boat. The market supplied us for nearly two weeks with fresh game and there was no necessity for us to waste time in hunting.

#### WINTERING INDIAN PONIES.

Some of the bottom lands below the mouth of the Musselshell were covered with forests of large cotton-

wood trees, measuring four to five feet in diameter, among them a smaller growth of saplings and underbrush. The Indians made their winter camps of large villages here, as the snow fall in the timber was three to four feet—the only feed for their immense bands of ponies was cottonwood bark. The young saplings were cut down and left in scattering piles around the village and the ponies peeled the bark from these young trees and lived on it the entire winter. By the time the steamboats arrived at these camping places in the spring the Indians had moved away and a supply of dry fuel was ready to take on board. Where the river ran between two ranges of hills it was narrow and in the month of September we saw large cakes of ice lodged seventy and eighty feet above the river surface that had been left there when the river gorged in the breakup in the spring. This was a hundred miles above where steamboats landed and put off supplies for the military post, Fort Totten, near Devil's lake, a hundred miles east of the landing, and the quartermaster's teams hauled them from the river to the post.

When we left the last military landing the wind was fair and the current strong. The sail was set and in order to take every advantage and make rapid headway, with the six oars, we sped along at eight or nine miles an hour. Rounding a sharp bend, late in the day, we expected to tie up here and make the run past the Indian camp ahead of us when night came on. Imagine our surprise when several

#### INDIAN LODGES LOOMED UP

half a mile ahead of us. It was too late to check

our speed and land. We were in the current sweeping down the bend close to the bank. Our boats had no keel and a flat bottom could not be easily handled in the current. We decided to take chances of running past the Indian camp. We had on board a man who belonged to one of the Indian trading stores down the river. He and his companion were on their way down in a small skiff. In a high wind their boat was driven on rocks in the rapids and was swamped. One of the men swam ashore and was rescued by the boat ahead of us. The other could not swim, but clung to the boat which was carried by the wind onto an island. As we approached the island he hailed us and we took him aboard. He could talk Sioux and seemed to know where all the hostiles were camped along the river. He was familiar with the camp we were nearing and believed we could run by it without being noticed, as no one was visible. Scarcely had we come opposite the lodges when a dozen dogs broke loose and their continual barking brought some of the squaws out. They hallooed to us and motioned for us to come on shore. They said the bucks were all out hunting a band of buffalo and had fired the prairie to drive them towards camp. The squaw man, whom we had rescued, told us that was only a trap and the sooner we got out of reach the safer we would be, so we got away as soon as possible. Before losing sight of their camp as many as forty bucks came out of the lodges and waved at us. The squaw man informed us that the bucks had purposely kept out of sight thinking the squaws might induce us to land and we would then fall easy victims. We were the first of the

fleet of boats to pass this camp in daylight and we had a narrow escape.

#### A MASS OF BUFFALOES.

When we rounded into the great bend of the Missouri six buffalo jumped from the bank and swam across, not two hundred yards ahead of us. While watching them scramble up the bank on the opposite shore our attention was attracted to a black moving mass, less than half a mile from the river bank. So dense was the pack it resembled miles of burnt prairie. It was a mass of buffaloes reaching away to the horizon, and extending for miles along the river. Our boat was abreast of the herd over one hour. It was one of the vast herds that roamed north of the Missouri river as far as the British possessions. It was a sight that few men have seen even in the palmiest buffalo days.

One day our provision supply was reduced to bacon and coffee. We landed at a wild plum grove and found an abundance of the fruit and also wild cherries and bull berries. The next day we replenished our provision supply at the trading store of a French trader on the bank of the river. I bought several bales of buffalo robes to place along the sides of the boat to protect our oarsmen from Indian arrows. This trader had built a stockade of posts, set on end, and inside were log huts and warehouses for storing goods. The structure was proof against attack by Indians. In trading he received the robes and furs through an opening in the stockade and passed out the goods the same way. Indians were not allowed inside, except

perhaps a chief or an Indian who directed the trading. Here we bought dried buffalo tongues at fifty cents per dozen. They could be had in quantities of a thousand or more at a less price. The Indians along the upper Missouri, when buffaloes were abundant, used the meat to make "pemmican." The lean was cut in pieces and the fat heated and poured over it. Bags were made of green buffalo hide—the hair side out—sewed with green hide strips. The meat and fat were sewed up in sacks weighing about one hundred and forty pounds each. When cold the package was as indestructible as a bag of sand.\*

---

#### FRENCH HALF-BREEDS.

A tribe of nomads, half French and half Indian, lived north of Fort Union, above the mouth of the Yellowstone. They were called French half-breeds. Once a year this picturesque caravan came from near the British line to Fort Berthold to trade. Each Indian drove a single ox harnessed with strips of buffalo hide to a two-wheeled cart, the entire cart, tires, wheels and axles, all being made of wood. Not a nail or piece of metal of any kind was used in their construction. The screeching of the wheels could be heard for miles. The carts were loaded with dressed buffalo hides and a part of their return freight was "pemmican." (The Dacotah name for this food is "wasna.") From five

---

\*Later I visited at old Fort Peck when the agent was about to move the agency down to Grand River. Inside the stockade was a pile of pemmican about as large as a stern wheel steamboat. The trader had traded for it from the Upper Missouri Indians. The United States agent in turn bought it from the trader for issue back to the Indians for winter food in case a hard winter and deep snow prevented driving beef cattle in for issue.

hundred to a thousand composed a train. The carts were driven by men—few women and children accompanying them.

Fort Berthold was the steamboat landing for the military post, Fort Totten, near Devil's lake, the distance about one hundred miles in the interior. During the winter the only communication from Fort Berthold to Devil's lake and also from Berthold to Fort Benton was by dogs and sledges, with half-breeds, or Uncpapa Indians for drivers—same as the method employed in Alaska and the arctic. When we reached Fort Berthold my father went to headquarters and hunted up the medical officer. From him he

#### PROCURED A PINT OF WHISKEY

for the sick man. On our arrival at Omaha, he found a letter from the doctor saying that "one of the officers here had reported to the war department that the medical officer was selling whiskey to citizens," and asking, "if he would state the circumstance clearly and aid him in clearing it up." General Grant was then in Washington and my father wrote to him explaining the matter. In due course of mail the General replied that the War department would immediately take the matter up, and an inquiry be made as to why the officer should not appear before a court martial and make the charge more definite, or fully establish the facts stated.

The trader's clerk at Fort Peck was "Club Foot George," whose two feet were "clubbed." The winter previous he had started for Fort Benton on horseback, with one pony, packing his provisions, etc. Several



miles below Benton his pony left him in a snow storm. His only safety lay in walking the distance through a foot of snow and passed near an Indian camp in the night. The next morning the Indians discovered the trail left in the snow by his club feet and not understanding it immediately organized a hunting party to follow the trail and kill the strange animal that made it. It was lucky for George that he was found in Fort Benton.

#### PETRIFIED TREES.

Above Grand River, where we landed for plums and berries, a short distance from the grove, was a hill covered with cactus and soapweed. Petrified stumps and trunks of trees, ten to twenty inches in diameter covered the hillside. Owing to shallow water steamboats could not land near here and very little was known of this bed of petrifications. It was "Bad Lands" and sand hills and near hostile Indians. One hundred miles below the mouth of the Yellowstone river, on the east bank of the Missouri, was Fort Berthold, a cantonment of United States troops, and also a trading store and a band of miserable Minneconjou Indians. The huts of the Indians were made entirely of sod or adobe, shaped cone fashion, like the ice huts of the Esquimaux. The Indians were a squalid lot of lazy and dirty people. A sun dance was going on when we landed to get a supply of provisions. The wind was fair for sailing and we lost no time in getting away, and saw nothing of the dance.

A few Indians used bull boats for crossing the river. A green buffalo hide stretched over a frame of willows, circular in form, about two feet deep, would carry an

Indian family of about six hundred pounds. One Indian sat near the edge and paddled towards him, otherwise the tub would only turn around.

#### A SCHOOL OF SNAGS.

Two hundred miles above Yankton we ran into schools of snags and could make no runs after night. It being important to get into civilization again, we made a head-light from a lard can and used candles, thinking this would enable us to see far enough ahead to avoid snags. On the stern of our boat we put out a red light to guide the boat behind us. The first night we landed and prepared supper on shore, and a light supper it was—we had bacon and coffee only.

An hour after we had pushed away from shore, heavy clouds darkened the sky and it became so dark we could scarcely distinguish the water from the sky. While we "stood by the oars" we let the current carry us. Suddenly a school of snags loomed up ahead of the light and before the oars could be handled the "Cora Bray" drifted onto two snags. We floated over the first and onto the second, which stood a foot above the water line. The boat swung broadside across the current between the two snags. The swift current raised the upperside of the boat and the lowerside lowered proportionately, so that the entire crew had to move to the upperside, to prevent being swamped. The water was ten feet deep. We were two hundred feet from shore. The "Hulk" lost sight of our light and landed, fearing we had swamped.

We were in a dangerous position. As usual the good judgment of McNear pointed out a way of re-

leasing the boat. (His suggestions were usually followed by his doing the work himself.) With a hand-saw he leaned over the side, reached the full length of his arm under water and began sawing the snag off below the bottom. This occupied about two hours. When the snag parted, the boat drifted onto the end of the stump, and there it rested in greater peril than before. The constant rocking might wear a hole in the bottom and scuttle our craft. Then the chance of any of us escaping hung by a slender thread. We began calling for the "Hulk." Soon they answered and slowly drifted toward us, keeping near the shore. When opposite they made fast to a snag. Being at close speaking distance we planned that the other boat should land, unload, and haul two hundred yards up stream; then drift slowly down, throw a rope to us, and then by manning their oars, pull us off. All this occupied over two hours. The first pull moved the boat so the stern swung down the current. There was a heavy weight in the bow that held us on the snag. Again the other boat went ashore, hauled up stream and drifted past us. Still our boat hung on the bow. No less than a dozen trips were made in this way before we were finally released. We landed and spent the rest of the night on shore. As I sat on a log near a camp fire McNear sat down beside me. He nudged me with his elbow and said: "Wasn't that a close shave for the soap box?"

The next day we passed snags on all sides. When night came, we landed alongside a dead tree and built a fire to cook our last rations of bacon and coffee. So far as we knew we were two hundred miles from

where we could replenish. One of our men strolled along the river bank around a sharp bend. Suddenly he called out at the top of his voice. We were away from the Indian country and could not imagine the cause of it, but lost no time in going to him. Long rows of lights were seen about a mile below us.

#### A STEAMBOAT.

Returning to camp we hastily loaded on our bedding, etc., and with all on board, we again swung into the current. All hands were guessing on the direction the steamboat was bound. If going down, we could not overtake her; if coming up, we would be no better off. When discovered she was tied up at the bank, and we made our craft fairly "whiz" in the current towards her. It was the steamer *Enterprise*, from Yankton, loaded with supplies for the up-river military posts. She had tied up for the night. Our landing was made just above her bow, where we built a fire. I was sent on board to prospect for provisions. On the lower deck a watchman directed me up to the "Texas" to find the mate, who was on watch. It was after midnight. He was alone and smoking a pipe. I explained who we were and our condition as to provisions, not forgetting to tell him that every man of our party of twenty-six people had gold dust to pay for anything he would supply us with to carry us to Yankton, a two days' run.

"When did you run short of grub?" he asked. I answered promptly: "We are not *short* of grub; we are entirely out." "The h—ll!" he said, "let's go wake up the steward."

I followed him with the eagerness of a hungry poodle down into the cabin and then to the pantry. Never before in my life did a steamboat pantry have the attraction this one had. The bread and cracker drawers were ransacked. An immense fish pan was filled from them, two boiled hams, some bacon, two large coffee boilers of coffee—as much as the steward and myself could carry—but it seemed to me I was never so strong before and could carry almost my own weight in provisions.

When all was prepared I handed the mate my buckskin bag of gold dust and said, "Help yourself, captain, as liberally as you have helped us." "Give the steward a little nugget for a breastpin, and we will be square," said he. The steward got the nugget for his scarf pin. The mate was also remembered in a substantial way.

When Sioux City was reached, some of our passengers left the boat and took the stage for their homes in the east, after a journey of two thousand miles in an open boat, made in thirty days, without accident, if we except the illness of the one man who fell overboard, who had suffered from mountain fever for three weeks.

It was frequently necessary for all hands to jump into the water waist deep and push the boat off a sandbar. With the exception of high winds and a shower one day the weather was the beautiful Indian summer from beginning to end.

At the mouth of the Niobrara river, a detachment of troops were stationed. They were at target practice when we passed and as we heard the shooting,

before coming in sight it caused us no little alarm, we thinking it was Indians.

The wonderful sights of buffalo, elk, mountain sheep and deer, together with the almost constant spice of danger through the hostile Indian country, cause me to look back upon the journey with greater pleasure than I do on any other of my varied experiences of travel by land or sea.



## A HERD OF MULES

### AND WHAT BECAME OF THEM.

In February, 1868, the Union Pacific road had been completed to Cheyenne, and I went from Omaha by train. There I took Gilmer & Salisbury's stage via Denver for Salt Lake thence by Wells-Fargo & Co.'s stage to Helena, Montana, to arrange for sending my herd of nearly a hundred mules, that had been freighting there, down along the line of the railroad grading, after the grass had started. The snow was deep on Laramie plains, and on Rattlesnake mountains. My only fellow passenger was a Mr. Frothingham, going to San Francisco, where he owned a line of sailing vessels. He told me his occupation was trading in "Coolies" in the southern islands. His method of loading them was similar to "packing sardines," and for food he gave them plum duff, with the plums left out. He was rather ponderous of build, with a fresh and tender face and silver gray hair and more suited to life on the sea than following a stage coach on foot, on snow ten feet deep over the mountains. We got along fairly well as far as old Fort Bridger. Jack Gilmer, one of the partners, drove us from here, and after supper at 10 o'clock at night on canned tomatoes, half cooked beans which at that altitude could scarcely be cooked tender without the addition of soda, we went to bed. The biscuits were of tough dark dough with a burned crust around them and about as indigestible as a ball of mud. They were

called "dobies." We went to bed in a station—a cabin built of logs. All the partitions were of common muslin cloth. The beds had a tick filled with hay, no sheets, and the covers were the cheapest cotton comforts. One with its weight would not keep you warm, and two would weight you down, so sleep was out of question. We had scarcely got warmed up in bed when we were called to start again and go over the snow while the frozen crust would bear up the stage. We pulled ourselves together and again resumed our journey. When we reached the spurs of the Wasatch mountains the moon was full, the night was almost as light as day, the temperature far below zero. After daylight, when the sun came up, the top crust of the snow began to soften and occasionally a mule would sink one foot in, or a wheel break through, and the driver told us we must get out and lighten up or we would get stuck in the snow. He also informed us there was a "swing" station five miles ahead with a stove in the stable where the stock tender slept and where we would change horses—a mild invitation to get out and walk. We climbed out and going on ahead, left the driver to his fate. Soon we found it necessary to blacken our cheeks with charcoal and wear a silk handkerchief over our faces to prevent snow blindness. Before reaching the station we sank in the soft snow and wallowed through to the top of a long, steep hill and here the crust of snow was getting soft and we lay down and rolled over and over to the bottom like a barrel—a much easier way of getting down than trying to walk. At the station we found a Mormon with a span of mules and a wagon loaded with coops



of live chickens, who had been there four days snow-bound. It was nearly noon when the stage arrived. Meanwhile we bought some chickens from the Mormon, dressed them and put them into a camp kettle to cook, as there was no food at the station. We ate the chickens about half cooked, as the stage must go on to a "home" station about sixteen miles away. About half of this distance we walked and lifted and tugged to help the stage over the bad crossings. My fellow passenger became entirely snow blind and was obliged to get into the stage and remain there. We spent the second night going over the snow crust and reached the head of Echo canyon. Here we were transferred to a lumber wagon and changed drivers. When we arrived at Salt Lake City, my fellow passenger's face, neck and ears had become one mass of blisters from the reflection of the sun on the snow and when we parted at Salt Lake his face resembled a man in the last stages of smallpox. He was not able to resume his journey for four weeks.

After resting a day I took the stage north for Helena. On this route all the gullies and ravines were blown full of snow and at the bottom of them ran a stream of melted snow and slush. The driver must push on and paid no attention to these obstacles and into them he would drive the leaders. At times they were belly deep in water and slush and the snow up to their backs. If the ravines were narrow the leaders would soon flounder to the bank, dragging the wheelers after them. Sometimes the four mules were unhitched and taken to the opposite bank. A long rope was tied to the doubletrees, the other end being

attached to the end of the tongue to pull the coach out. They could not always move the coach. In this event the passengers and driver would mount the harnessed mules and ride from one to ten miles, as the case might be, to the station ahead and get the company's men to ride back with extra men and stock, pull the coach out and come on to the station. These instances were not rare, especially where the road led through Portneuf canyon. Nothing could be worse than the meals served along the route. On account of the snow the coach could carry nothing but live freight and all the stations were low on provisions. We reached Helena safely. Mr. Pat Largey had my mules on pasture at his ranch near Helena, also a lot belonging to Mr. Edward Creighton, and we arranged to send them all in one herd overland, direct to Carbon on the Union Pacific railroad, when grass came. The herd was placed in charge of "Billy" Hurlbert and four men, one of whom was M. J. Feenan, now living in Omaha. It would make little difference by what route they drove the mules. The danger was about equal, for the Indians were in an ugly humor because of the building of the railroad and the immense travel to the gold mines by every route from all directions.

Hurlbert left Helena about April 15th, 1868. For some reason unknown to me a gray mare is always chosen for a bell mare for all pack trains and loose mule herds while being driven and there was no exception in this case. The route from Helena was on the Salt Lake trail, Pleasant Valley, Camas Prairie, Market lake, fording Snake river at old Fort Hall, Montpelier, Soda Springs, Sublet Cut-Off to

Green River, then up Bitter Creek to Point of Rocks, then following the Union Pacific survey to Carbon, Wyoming. The drive was made in thirty days without the loss of an animal and no accident to the men. The only incident on the drive was the trouble in holding the herd at night, only one man standing guard the first half and he was relieved by one man for the latter half. Mr. Creighton was at Carbon to receive them, and at once began arrangements to have the mules shod, provide harness and put them at work on the grade. The harness was delayed en route by the railroad and the herd was sent out on the prairie about a mile from camp to graze, in charge of Jack Strode. After they had been out about two weeks a band of Sioux Indians in broad daylight rode into the herd, surrounded it, shook their blankets and with their unearthly yells, stampeded every animal in Strode's charge, leaving him to find his way into camp, luckily escaping with his life. Charles H. Rickards, who came down with the herd and was with the stock when it ran off, at once went with men out on the trail and followed it about sixty miles, thinking the thieves were road agents disguised as Indians—a frequent occurrence. They followed the trail all night in the direction of Elk mountain and on to the Platte river, where they discovered a large camp of Indians on the opposite bank and gave up the chase. All these adventures had an abrupt termination, for not a head of stock was recovered, and the whole matter ended there. Only one day before the Indians stampeded the stock, Mr. Creighton was in Omaha. He dropped into my store in the morning

and offered me \$135 per head spot cash for all of my mules. As my father, then at Davenport, Iowa, and myself owned them jointly, I referred the offer to him by wire. That same afternoon Mr. Creighton called at the store again, and handed me a telegram from J. H. McShane, who had gone down the road, reading as follows: "Just received a message from camp saying entire herd of mules run off today at 1 o'clock by Indians."

The value of my interest in the herd was \$12,000. Both that and the mules were irretrievably lost.

Some time after the events narrated in the preceding pages I learned that the Sioux Chief, Old-Man-Afraid-Of-His-Horses, referred to in the story of the Sioux peace commission council at Red Cloud agency, on page 76, headed the party which stole our mules. It seems apparent that while the old man was afraid of his own horses he stood in considerable less fear of our mules.



## ABOUT AN ARMY POST TRADERSHIP.

During General Grant's first presidential term I learned that there was a vacancy in the post tradership at Fort Laramie, Wyoming, and I immediately went to Washington, D. C., to apply for it. This being my first visit to the capital, and wishing to reach the President as soon as possible, I got a letter from Mr. Orville L. Grant to General Dent, usher at the White House. It was the 19th of December, 1872, when I presented my note to General Dent. He took it to the President and, returning almost immediately, showed me into the executive room. I may have been somewhat abashed in the presence of a president, but I was greeted so cordially that the embarrassment soon left me. The President, after inquiring after the health of my father and family, said, "What can I do for you, John?" I answered "The post tradership at Fort Laramie, Wyoming, is vacant, and I came to make an application for it. Having no other acquaintance in the capital I take the liberty of making my business known to you." "Well," he said, "these matters properly belong to the Secretary of War, General Belknap. I will give you a note to him, and you can come back and see me after seeing the Secretary." He wrote the letter in my presence and I at once called on the Secretary. Mr. Crosby, the chief clerk, handed my card in and I was admitted without delay. The Secretary read the card, looked at me smilingly and said: "Well, Mr. Collins, this is most complimentary; it is almost an order for me to give you this appointment. I learn Fort Laramie in a business point of view is one of the best posts in the army."

"Yes," I replied, "that is why I apply for it." The Secretary said, "I am going up to the White House today, and will see the President. You can call here tomorrow morning."

The next morning I was promptly at the War office. When I got audience with the Secretary, he told me that I had stirred up quite a strife in the matter of this post tradership. "A number of prominent people," said he "some of them from your own state, and several senators, also want this post. A complaint has been lodged here that you are a democrat." This I did not deny, and feeling that I could not say anything to the Secretary that would advance my cause I requested him to leave the matter open until I could again see the President who had then gone to Kentucky to visit his father who was dangerously ill. On the 28th inst. I again called on the President and told him that the only opposition to me seemed to be that I was a democrat. With the remark, "I think I can explain this matter," the President gave me another card of which the following is a fac simile:

*If you see no special  
reason why John Collins  
should not receive the opt. of  
distilled water Laramie, or if you  
have no appointment  
which you wish specially  
to make yourself I wish you  
would give it to him. The*

charge of Democracy against him ought not to be held as a reason for his non appointment. The family I have known from <sup>my</sup> infancy. They have always been Democrats. But I have had no stronger supporter than E. A. Collins & his two sons. W. H. Grant  
Dec. 28/72

The presentation of this note resulted in my appointment the same day.

The ten years following, myself and my brother, Gilbert H. Collins, alternately held the commission of post trader. I occasionally visited Washington, and always called at the White House to pay my respects to President and Mrs. Grant. With one exception, on every visit, either the President or Mrs. Grant invited me to lunch or dinner, which invitations I always accepted.

The exception was the year that all the post traders in the United States were summoned to Washington, to tell how their appointments were obtained. I went before Heister Clymer's committee at the capitol.

The following explains itself:

"Washington Correspondence of the *New York Sun*,  
April 1st, 1876.

"The Committee on Expenditures in the War Department this morning examined John S. Collins, post trader at Fort Laramie. Mr. Collins said he got the

post on the recommendation of the President, whose father, Jesse Grant, had been a partner with Collins' father in business. In order to obtain more easy access to the President, he got a letter of introduction from Orville Grant to Mr. Dent, usher at the White House, and the President gave him a letter to Secretary Belknap. He never paid a dollar directly or indirectly, either to get or to hold the post. The profits of the post were from \$8,000.00 to \$15,000.00 a year. Collins was assessed \$100.00 this summer for Republican campaign purposes. Mr. Clymer declared himself satisfied that this was a perfectly proper appointment, given by the President out of his high regard for Collins' father, and said, 'This is the most decent post trader I have seen yet.' "

In the evening I called on the President and told him of my having been ordered to Washington by the sergeant-at-arms; also of my statement made in the committee room as to how I received my appointment. The President said, "I am glad you obeyed the summons. If it were possible for me to appoint to office more men of my own selection, such instances might not occur." I left Washington the same evening.

When President R. B. Hayes came to the White House, succeeding President Grant, I learned from what I deemed reliable information, that President Hayes asked Ex-President Grant if there were any appointments he had made that he desired to have stand. General Grant's answer was: "There are two appointments I feel an interest in. One is Mr. Kramer, the husband of my sister, who is minister at Copenhagen. The other is John Collins, the post trader at



Fort Laramie. If you will see that they each get a hearing before anyone is appointed in their place it would gratify me." During President Hayes' administration of four years, I remained post trader at Fort Laramie. When Garfield succeeded him, I then remained over a year. Then the Council of Administration appointed the brother of one of the officers in the post and in February following I left Fort Laramie. Nothing has called me there since. This being the most prominent post in the Northwest, there are many historical incidents connected with it in the years previous to 1882 that John Morrison, my present associate in business and manager of the store at the fort, is familiar with which would be of great interest could he be induced to make a record of them.

\* \* \*

### **HUNTING BIG GAME WITH A MILITARY ESCORT.**

The fall previous to the beginning of the Sioux Indian war of '76, General George Crook spent some time at Fort Laramie, that being the rendezvous for the army. The Indians were in an ugly mood. Travel in every direction was regarded as dangerous. General Crook became restless and suggested a hunt for big game in the vicinity of Laramie Peak. A good angel seemed to hover over this man and he did not hesitate to carry out any plan that suggested itself to him or any orders from his superior officers. On this occasion, however, Captain "Teddy" Egan was ordered to go along with his company of "Grey Horse

Cavalry;" also Lieutenant Philo Clark. General Crook, Clark and myself made up the hunting party. Leaving the post it was a day's march to the foot-hills, where Collins Cut-Off entered the mountains and came out on Laramie Plains.

From the first camp we hunted the northeast side of the mountain with good success. Besides killing elk and deer Clark ran onto a band of mountain sheep, climbing up the rocky ledge of the canyon, coming away from water. Clark was a good game shot and as the sheep climbed the rocks he picked the leader off at one hundred yards. Another jumped to the lead and Clark picked him off. A third one took his place and almost in a breath Clark had all three tumbling down towards the creek. General Crook, always successful in killing any kind of game he hunted, reported elk and deer. I followed the "bugle call" of a bull elk, (the most musical note, I think, uttered by any living thing in the mountains and only heard during the rutting season.) The "call" came from up the mountain side. While resting from the difficult climb I sat on a rock and began looking the country over with a field glass. Just above me a ledge of rock projected and my direction led me around and over the ledge. Here I discovered a full

#### SET OF TEPEE POLES

set on the flat surface of the ledge. There was no covering on the poles as the place was used only as a lookout by the Indians. The view covered the valley of the Platte, the Laramie, and surrounding country for fifty miles or more. There were signs of this lookout having been recently oc-

cupied. The brush around its approach was tramped down, some of the small trees were barked, and a bundle of sticks lay inside the poles for fire wood. So interested was I in examining the place that I scarcely noticed a bull elk as he came thundering down the mountain side, crashing through the underbrush, with tongue out, foaming and snorting like an enraged bull. Catching only a glimpse of him through the bushes about forty yards away I took a hasty shot and down he fell with a broken shoulder.

The next morning we broke camp and drove up the mountain side. The trail was little used and gullies were washed out and boulders exposed and we were obliged to bridge an occasional bad crossing, to let the wagon and ambulance over. We camped at dusk about a mile before getting through the mountains. Early next morning Captain Eagan with his cavalry went ahead to examine the roads. In half an hour he came onto a burning camp fire and the head and pieces of a freshly killed elk hanging on a tree. Near this was a wagon track and tracks of unshod ponies and around the fire were moccasin tracks, evidently not an hour old. The captain rode back to warn the hunters not to leave the trail before reaching that point. Here we stopped and cooked our breakfast over this same camp fire. After hunting one day in this vicinity and each of the three hunters having seen unmistakable signs of Indians and having killed all the game we wanted, we left the following morning and drove directly through to Fort Laramie.

On the previous day's hunt, General Crook followed the trail of a bear that led him so far away he could not reach camp that night. As I was the last of the

party to have seen him, the next morning I took a soldier with me and soon found him coming in. Meanwhile the outfit had broken camp and started for the Sybyle river, a fork of the Laramie; at the end of their trail we found the party nooning at a spring, just at the edge of the timber. Here we compared notes. Three of the party having on the previous day's hunt found unmistakeable signs of hostile Indians we decided to give up the hunt and return to the post at once. To hunt big game that required a lot of soldiers to guard you was rather a complex affair and we lost no time in deciding upon this course. Soon after our return the ranchmen living near by drifted in. Among them was Johnny Owens, who lived at Eagle's Nest, near the Chugwater. From him we learned that he had sent two men with a team for house logs, who made camp here. The next morning one of them built a fire to prepare breakfast, the other going after the horses. The latter reported "Indian signs," so fresh he could "smell 'em." After breakfast they hurried out of the mountains. The sequel to all this was that Owens' men lit the fire, cooked their breakfast and "lit out." The Indians "jumped their claim," and cooked *their* breakfast by the same fire. We followed and used the same fire for our breakfast and then *we* "lit out." All of which occurred in less than two hours.

\* \* \*

When in command in Arizona, General George Crook took a young Apache Indian with him on a deer hunt. The Indian stationed the General on the "runway" and said, "You stay here, deer sure

come," while he beat the chapperel to drive the game out. The General stood his ground patiently for five or six hours, but saw no sign of game.

When the Indian returned, he found the General still waiting on the trail and asked, "Deer no come?" "No," said the General, "Deer sure come, he no come today, maybe he come tomorrow."

\* \* \*

When our beloved Major General George Crook, friend and companion of many royal hunts and happy days, died March 21st, 1890, at the Grand Pacific hotel in Chicago, it was the sad privilege of Webb Hayes and myself to be among the pall bearers, with Marshall Field, George M. Pullman, William McKinley, then congressman; Colonel T. H. Stanton and others, and we accompanied the body to Oakland, Md., where the funeral took place. Ex-President Hayes accompanied us and attended the funeral.

The body of General Crook was afterward removed to Arlington cemetery, Washington, District of Columbia. Mrs. Crook is buried beside him.

A beautiful and appropriate monument has been erected at Arlington by the General's friends, many of Omaha's prominent citizens aiding in its construction.

\* \* \*

**"IF YOU DON'T PRAY BEFORE YOU EAT, YOU  
WON'T STEAL.**

In '75 Spotted Tail, chief of the Brules, came to Fort Laramie, where I was post-trader, for the remains of his daughter, who had died at the post sev-

eral years before and was placed in a plain box covered with Indian cloth. The box was set up on four posts, near sand bluffs, west of the garrison. On the head end the head of her favorite white pony was nailed and its tail was nailed on the other end to "travel with her to the Happy Hunting Ground." In the box were placed the trinkets and ornaments she wore when alive. "Spot" said to me, "My daughter was buried here where my Indians lived and many of our children were born. We traded here; the young men played their games, raced their ponies and our Great Father's people (the soldiers) were good to us. Now that has all passed and we want our dead at one place. I came to take my daughter to my agency on Beaver Creek." Before calling on the commanding officer, I took "Spot" to my house to dinner. A "squaw man" named Bouchere, his son-in-law, accompanied us as interpreter. At the table I filled "Spot's" plate liberally and said to Bouchere, "Tell 'Spot' to help himself and eat plenty." He replied, "Ah Cola, (my friend) you don't pray before you eat." He had dined with his Indian agents who always said grace. "No," I answered. "My prayers are all through the day in my business." His face beamed with smiles, as he added, "Then you won't steal. If you don't pray before you eat you won't steal."

There were some interesting features connected with preparing the remains of his daughter for transportation by wagon. The bones and trinkets were placed in a new box lined with stars and striped calico, covered with Indian cloth, nailed on with brass tacks, in all of which the commanding officer and other officers, including Post Surgeon Hartsuf, assisted and

directed with decorum befitting the occasion. The box was placed in the wagon and they drove away to the agency.



## THE SIOUX INDIAN COMMISSION.

When the sub-Sioux commission, consisting of S. D. Hinman, Chairman; A. B. Comingo, W. H. Ashby, and myself, Secretary for the full commission, left Fort Laramie, they went directly to Red Cloud agency, where Crawford, Nebraska, now stands. The Indian agent was advised of our coming and notified the chiefs and leading men to assemble for a preliminary council, where the Indians would be informed of the object of our visit. Right here began the importance of the whole affair and it fell on the sub-commission to perform the labor of arranging for the grand council to be held in the fall. At this council Red Cloud,\* Old Man Afraid of His Horses,\* Young Man Afraid, Red Dog, American Horse and several other leading men, and young men of less importance, of the Ogallala band, met the commission.

The chairman explained the object of our visit in a few words, namely, to treat with all the bands of the Sioux tribe, both in the interior and along the Missouri river, for the relinquishment of their right to the Black Hills country, to enable white men to go there and mine for gold. Gold had been discovered and small parties of white men were then in the hills prospecting. Red Cloud was the first to reply to the chairman. He said:

“When the Great Father sends his White Chiefs to talk with us we hear them. The Black Hills is our

---

\*Chiefs.



bank, and our money is in the ground; we want it to stay there for our children. There are many Indians up north who are the same as we are and I cannot speak for all, I am the head chief, and when we have business we want all our people to hear; then we can decide. If you go to Spotted Tail's camp and tell him all this news, then he will bring more Indians together and we will talk it over, when you come back; this is all for today."

Chairman Hinman then said: "We can't spend so much time, we want to go to the Hills at once; we want you to send some of your wise young men with us; we will ask Spotted Tail to do the same. We go to his agency tomorrow, then we will come back here and start for the hills,—this is the nearest way. When we return we want six of your young men to be ready to go with us. They can take their own horses and we will carry tents and provision for all. When the business is finished in the hills we will go to the Missouri river and tell the Indians there, and your young men must go to the river also, when the business is finished there Inspector Daniels will bring your young men back with the teams."

The next morning the commission left for Spotted Tail agency on Beaver creek, arriving about noon. Soon after our arrival Spotted Tail stalked in followed by a number of his leading men for a "small talk." Of all the chiefs and all the leading Indians we met after leaving "Spots" agency there were none who came to council who exercised the authority over all their band as did Spotted Tail over the Brules, and he only the appointed chief of an army officer, Gen-

eral Harney, I believe, because of his friendly influence at the Ash Hollow fight on the Platte river. He was not an hereditary chief. Always good natured and smiling, with a voice as soft and clear as a woman's, a wily politician, whose purpose in the interest of his tribe, it has been said, could be swerved by money, ponies or their value in buffalo robes, for his personal interest. I cannot say he was a disinterested chief in the interest of his band. He was the chosen orator. Tall, majestic, mild of manner, always beginning with "Ah Cola" (my friend), allowing his dark blue Mackinac blanket to fall from his right shoulder, to give his arm free play in gesturing, he began:

"I am here to tell you that Red Cloud sent us news that you come to take our lands where the gold is, that is our bank. We want more people here to hear what we say; my people do not like to have white chiefs sent by the Great Father to make our land smaller; we will come and talk when the sun is there," (pointing to the west and indicating about sunset) as the day was very warm.

At that time came the delegation of about fifty Indians, their faces painted and wearing all the paraphernalia they usually wore on grand occasions.

They arranged themselves along the board walk in front of the agency building and, according to their custom, got out their pipes and tobacco, first invoking the Great Spirit by gestures, then they began smoking. Presently a half dozen of the leaders shook hands with the commissioners, sat down on the ground, and again passed their pipes around in silence.

There is an etiquette among Indians in regard to speaking, that might be imitated to advantage by some white men, viz.: They choose one or more speakers in council, no other voice being heard.

Spotted Tail stood up and said: "My people don't want you to go to the Black Hills; if you go I will send some young men with you. Some Indians are up there hunting and they may steal your horses and make trouble. When you go to the Missouri river, our young men will tell our people that we are the most Indians and that they must come here to hold council. The land belongs to us and we have taken care of it. They must send some old men that know about the country and some young men who can hear. Red Cloud and me think Chadron creek the best place for a big council. We want you to give the young men tents to sleep in and plenty to eat and take care of their ponies. Go back and tell Red Cloud and the old men that we will go on Chadron creek for the big council. That is all."

While the chiefs and old men were holding council to give their lands away or sell them for a price the young men showed their opposition to the scheme. The council lasted until near dark, then the Indians went to their lodges to select the young men to accompany us. The next morning when we were ready to start the inspector in charge of the transportation informed us that

#### OUR WAGONS WERE TIED UP WITH ROPES

and we could not move. This had the appearance of an ugly turn in the affair, but after an investigation it was discovered that it was only a good natured

prank, suggested by "Spot" and carried out by some of the young men. The ropes were removed by the young men accompanying us and our party started on their long and tedious journey via. Red Cloud agency for the Black Hills, thence to the Missouri river. We were detained here two days before leaving for Red Cloud. Runners had gone before us and given out the news that we were coming and on our arrival there six of Red Cloud's young men came to us—this making twelve ambassadors—and we at once started, taking a trail east of the pine and chalk bluffs, that are directly north of where Crawford, Nebraska, now is. The only duty the commission had to perform in the hills was to examine the country. General Richard I. Dodge was camped on Rapid creek with two companies of soldiers, to prevent mining on that creek and the adjacent country, until the treaty would permit. From this camp we followed the stream out of the mountains east and on to Elk creek. In places pools of alkali water stood, about the color of coffee, and we were obliged to camp here, it being late in the day.

Near this water hole were as many as ten turtles measuring about four feet across and five feet in length. They were all petrified and would weigh not less than 200 pounds each. The pile had the appearance that each turtle had tried to climb over the other and all lay in a pile when the water receded. This point was not far from the lands where Professor Marsh visited a few years later to make his collection of petrifications. Joseph Merreville was our guide and he was one of the old-timers of the Jim Bridger type who had spent many years with the traders and

Indians. He led our teams over to the junction of the Belle Fourche where both forks came together and formed the Cheyenne river. When we reached the Cheyenne it was difficult finding a place our teams could drive down into the narrow valley. Joe led us into a washout that became deeper and more difficult as we descended to the valley. Part of the time the wagon wheels were on a steep bank straddling the creek bed where the animals could scarcely find footing. At one point about twelve feet below the surface the skull and bones of a buffalo protruded from the cut banks. Bones and skulls were everywhere visible. The valley the stream ran through, varied from a quarter to half a mile in width. The banks were cut walls of black shale from thirty to one hundred feet high straight up and down and were thickly dotted with white spots that could be seen in the black banks fully a mile away. These white spots proved to be petrified turtles ranging in size from an egg up to ten or twelve inches long and were coated over with a white lime substance. There were also hundreds of pieces of long, slim, snake-like perifications coated over with a shell of iridescent color. These are found all through the foothills and are supposed to have existed long before the fish age. We traveled two days in this valley before finding an outlet where teams could get out onto the divide separating the Cheyenne from the Moreau river. Merreville told us the trail was plain and for fifty or more years had been traveled by Indians with travois from the Missouri river to the Black Hills to procure lodge poles and for hunting. Finally we came to a rough edge of land leading south which sloped up to the high plateau and there seemed

a prospect of getting out of the valley. The bit of land or rather a back bone ran to a sharp edge in the middle and sloped off abruptly on each side. It was necessary to double teams and with the ambulance and eight horses led by the guide, a start was made. The horses straddled the ridge and the ambulance wheels were on either side of it. Soon it became necessary to use shovels to cut the top edge away so the axletree would not scrape the ground, then all hands excepting the Indians (who stuck to their ponies and while all the others stopped to begin work they improved their time sitting around on the ground smoking their pipes and talking) would shovel away the obstructions to the wheels, and again make a start. At the very worst place on the trail where ropes were required to hold the wagon from sliding into a deep gulch dragging the mules after, Joe, the guide, became thoroughly disgusted and with a choice selection of swear words, said: "I don't know where dat road gone, he was plain wagony trail." "How long ago was that?" asked Comingo. "Twenty-five years," said Joe.

We were all day getting out of the valley and up on the table land. The country was flat and covered with a luxurious growth of gramma or buffalo grass. As the breeze swayed it it resembled a vast field of oats without a weed or shrub for miles. Buffalo skulls and bones were everywhere to be seen. Our first camp on this high divide was at spring holes and near a small lake. One of our party killed a large quantity of blue wing teal duck on which we had a feast fit for a king. They were cooked in a camp kettle over an outdoor fire—a few potatoes and bits of bacon boiled with them. Two days' travel on this divide and

we left the gramma grass for the Moreau river, then down this river east and camped where the creek banks were twenty feet high. During this day's travel, being in an antelope country, several of the Indians left the trail to hunt and came in at night with five antelope and one of our teamsters brought an antelope to our camp. When the Indian hunters came with their ponies packed with game, preparations were at once made for a feast. In the fine pool of clear spring water they first took a bath, after which they greased their bodies from head to foot with the marrow from the leg bones of the antelope. The fire was started with willows found near by. The antelope were skinned and dressed and put over the fire in various ways. When Indians kill deer or antelope they drink the warm blood and eat the liver raw while it is warm with animal heat. The Indians sat around the fire eating and smoking nearly all night. I walked over to their fires before breakfast next morning and all that was visible after the night's debauch were two front quarters of one antelope. Twelve Indians had actually devoured four and one-half antelope (three were small) at one continuous meal during the night, while our party of about an equal number had disposed of only one hind quarter of a single antelope. The Indians could have traveled three or four days without a mouthful of food after this meal.

Our trail continued through gramma grass along the divide and to the Moreau river, then north and down this stream to its mouth, arriving at Standing Rock where a lot of Winnebago Indians and part of a band of Yanctonais drew rations. Arrangements

were at once begun for holding council at the village of the wild Yanctonais.

\* \* \*

### A FEAST WITH SPOTTED TAIL.

While I was with the Sioux commission at Spotted Tail Agency, on Beaver creek, Nebraska, in 1875, about fifty miles west of where Chadron now is, Spotted Tail, chief of the Brules, invited S. D. Hinman and myself to a feast at his lodge. Mr. Hinman represented the Episcopal church at Santee Agency on the Missouri river and had a most intelligent knowledge of the language of the Dacotahs and the Indian character and was a fine interpreter.

"Spot" escorted us to his lodge, half a mile from the agency. While the feast was being prepared he entertained us outside. His lodge was made of dressed elk hide, and was decorated with paintings of some of his adventures. The poles were hung with "medicine" bags of red flannel, stuffed with roots and herbs, painted eagle feathers, antelope hair being tied about them. A squaw came out of the lodge with a rope of rawhide in one hand and in the other she had a stone attached to a stick covered with rawhide. A mongrel dog was running about and after two or three "throws" she got the rope over his head, dragged him to her and with the war club, beat him on the head until dead. Then she dragged him into the lodge. Hinman evidently understood the program, and his face fairly beamed with smiles as he turned and asked, "What do you suppose she will do with that dog?" Although I had my suspicions I was not prepared to



say. When the feast was announced we crawled through an opening in the lodge, the cover to which sewed on with rawhide strings held up by a buckskin thong was a beaver skin stretched over a bent willow and stitched with strings. When released it dropped down and covered the opening. In the middle of the lodge a camp kettle hung over a fire. Piles of furs and buffalo robes lay around the edge. Two or three young bucks lounged on the robes. It was plain that we were guests of Spotted Tail only. We sat with legs crossed on the piles of furs. The squaw with a tin cup dipped out to each tin plate four or five pounds from the kettle, and it was handed around. By this time I had taken in the situation, and, turning to Hinman said, "I am not very hungry and don't know 'what the deuce' I can do with this plate of dog. Can't you get me out of it?" For once in my life I can truthfully say I was "up against it." The good humor of Hinman provoked me. I felt like depriving the Santee Agency of one of its valuable representatives. Hinman, while enjoying my predicament, said, "If you will do something handsome for me I may get you out of this scrape." "Anything you ask, I'll do" was my answer, "only get quick action for we are delaying the feast." Hinman said, "Lay a dollar on the side of that plate of dog, and hand it to Spot's nephew. After he has eaten his own he will eat yours and you will be square with Spotted Tail." Hinman explained to "Spot" that I was not hungry and had hired his nephew to eat for me. "Spot" said, "How, How," and I was square with the chief.

## COUNCIL WITH THE YANCTONAIS.

Above Standing Rock Agency on the Missouri river there was a village of one thousand lodges of "Yanktonais." News of the coming of the commission was brought by Indian runners, two days in advance of our arrival at the agency. Some of the Indians met us at the agency and asked that the council be held at the village, saying that all preparations were made and a great many Indians would come to council if it was held at the place designated by them. The following day, at noon, the commissioners left by ambulance to meet the Indians as they had planned. These Indians were known as wild, lived on the prairie. They would not come to the Agency to draw government rations and would go to council only on the prairie. The village was located on the open prairie back from the river. The lodges were all covered with dressed buffalo and elk skins and two thousand ponies were grazing near by. An ingenious shelter was arranged. The poles from a dozen lodges were placed in an oblong circle and covered on two sides with skins from the lodges. These were decorated on the outside with pictures representing the achievements of the owners in hunting, in war and in horse stealing raids. There was no covering over the center. Inside the poles were hung with bows and quivers of arrows, lance sticks, beaded tobacco pouches, painted shields made from the tough and wrinkled part of raw buffalo skin, medicine bags filled with herbs, painted eagle feathers and tails from antelope. All the arms of the Indians and war clubs were laid aside and everything had the evidence of a peace council, showing that the Indians understood the eti-

quette due to a council of men sent out by the Great Father. The Indians assembled had laid aside their blankets and buffalo robes usually worn and were dressed principally in shirts and leggings made of deer skins fringed and garnished with beads and porcupine quills. Some wore war bonnets made of eagle feathers, streaming from their heads to the ground; others wore no headdress but their hair was painted red on the scalp and braided with strips of weasel and dressed beaver and otter skins and leggings beaded and bound below the knee with strings of small bells. Earrings, brooches of shell and dozens of strings of beads ornamented their necks. They also wore beaded moccasins. Some of the middle aged men wore medals that had been handed down from their fathers and grandfathers, given them in past years by various presidents when they had visited Washington. These they valued among all else of their possessions. I offered one of them \$50.00 for a Thomas Jefferson medal, made of copper-bronze with the president's bust in relief upon one side, the reverse side describing the purpose for which it was given and the occasion. One of them showed a map containing all the territory north of the Missouri line and extending to the British possessions, the eastern boundary being the Missouri river, then extending west to the Rocky mountains. This entire country was then Nebraska Territory. One Campbell, living in St. Louis, Missouri, was the Indian agent then. This, too, was of great value to the owner as showing the country claimed by the Indians as "their lands."

Piles of robes and furs were scattered around for

the commission to sit upon; the Indians sat upon the ground in a circle, smoking their pipes and passing them among the chiefs, always their custom before beginning a council. The chief spoke first, then the chairman of the commission addressed the Indians and explained the object of our coming, viz., to induce them to send a large delegation to Chadron creek in August to meet the delegations from the other bands of Sioux in a grand council, on the business named in council held with other bands previous to reaching the Yanctonais.

It was near sunset when the council was ended and the golden glow fell on the thousand lodges and brought out the dark chestnut color of the tops of the lodges and the smoke blackened ends of the lodge poles. Young bucks were catching their ponies and riding through the village telling of the great council; runners were mounted and dashing in every direction, carrying the news to smaller camps located a day's ride away. On their arrival fresh riders and fresh horses would take up the relay and ride at a furious gait to other camps. By this method of conveying news Indians camped an hundred miles from the council grounds would get the news carried at a speed of from ten to twelve miles an hour.

Children were playing about with bows and arrows and their antics were like monkeys. The lively scene of Indians in red, blue and green blankets, moving about the lodges, riding and driving ponies in every direction, made a beautiful picture.

#### AN INDIAN COURTSHIP.

An exceptionally interesting feature was the courting of the young bucks and their sweethearts. Just

beyond the lodges was a grass covered mound on which were congregated fifty or more couples. They were not seated on easy chairs or luxuriant lounges, but all stood erect and almost motionless. The young bucks wrapped their gay colored blankets of red, blue or green around the maidens and stood like statues with no effort to conceal the fact that they were courting in the most approved Indian fashion.

When a young Indian has impressed his sweetheart with the fact that he is wooing her in dead earnest the buck creeps cautiously to the lodge of her parents after dark leading a pony. This he ties to a stake and leaves him. On coming out in the morning, if the father of the girl does not turn the pony loose it is an evidence that the old man is not unfavorable to the suitor's intentions, but the bid for his daughter is not high enough and more ponies are required. The next night one or more ponies are led to the lodge and tied in the same place. This is repeated until enough ponies are offered to get the approval of the parent. When the horses are sent out with the herd of the owner then the principal part of the courtship and marriage ceremony is completed. The young man is then welcomed to the lodge and treated as one of the family, the bride resumes her everyday occupation of herding the ponies, carrying wood and water to the family and doing the regular camp drudgery.

It is sometimes the custom of the parent to bestow on the bride all the ponies given him by her suitor, together with ten or more from his own herd. The expression, "ten horses," is more frequently used in any and every trade than any other number. For a greater

number than ten it is "ten more," even if the number be less than ten. Buffalo robes are usually reckoned the same way. The robes counting one "bale" by the traders.

The original record of the entire proceedings including the speeches of the chairman, the replies of all the Indians, together with the names of all the prominent Indians, is in my possession.

\* \* \*

### **BURIAL OF THE DAUGHTER OF AMERICAN HORSE.**

The day the Sioux commission arrived at Red Cloud Agency the place was in mourning. The daughter of American Horse had died the evening before. "Haranguers" were sent among the Indians to give notice of the grief in camp and, according to custom when there is a death in the lodge, the lodge and the entire family move away from the place. American Horse gave away his horses, buffalo robes, and everything of value, unbraided his hair and let it fall around his shoulders, covered his face with mud, and lacerated his arms and legs, a custom when a relation dies. I had known him personally for some time as a prominent Indian. When he came into the trading store, he recognized me. Through an interpreter he told me "his heart was down in the dirt," and when his daughter died he gave away everything he had and was now poor and wanted me to "give him some red Indian cloth to wrap his daughter in to bury her." Three yards of cloth at \$2.00 a yard was my donation. I strolled down where the lodge was being moved, saw the box placed in an agency wagon and driven

away to a grassy mound west of the agency, followed by women and children only. Among them were two or three professional criers who, on such occasions, wail and weep more earnestly than do members of the family. The next day American Horse went around and accumulated about as much plunder as he had given away.

\* \* \*

### **A BRAVE INDIAN.**

In 1875 a council with the Sioux Indians was held on Chadron creek, Neb., near old Red Cloud agency, the government being represented by the full commission consisting of the following: Senator W. B. Allison, chairman; General Alfred Terry, General E. F. Lawrence, Senator E. Howe,\* Colonel Comingo and Captain W. H. Ashby, with S. D. Hinman, interpreter, and J. S. Collins, named by President Grant, as secretary.

To arrange the meeting of the various bands of the Sioux at Chadron creek it was necessary to visit all their villages, hold councils and induce them to send delegations of their chiefs and leading men to Chadron in the month of August. This duty was performed by Colonel Comingo, Captain Ashby, S. D. Hinman and myself, with Joe Merreville as guide and interpreter. We traveled by wagons across the country and through the Black Hills, thence east to the Missouri river, to Mandan village, as far north as Fort Sully, D. T., and south to the Santee Agency and to Omaha.

This journey consumed two months' time, and we were accompanied by twelve young men selected by

---

\*Senator Howe, although appointed a member of the commission, did not join the other commissioners.

Red Cloud and Spotted Tail as ambassadors to give our branch of the commission the proper standing among the various bands. It will be remembered that away back in '75 the boundary lines of an Indian reservation were called "dead lines." All the tribes were restless and dissatisfied, and this hostility which precipitated the great Indian war of 1876, with General George Crook at the head and General Terry in command of troops embracing Custer's command, was at this early day apparent.

It was known that any proposition made to the Sioux leading to the relinquishment of titles to their lands would not be kindly received and in their then restless mood it was an undertaking not void of danger. The greatest caution was necessary in broaching the subject in councils to influence them to send large delegations several hundred miles from their villages, to treat for the single purpose of

#### GIVING UP THEIR LANDS

in the Black Hills, which, with the full knowledge of the Hills being rich in gold, they had learned to regard as their "bank."

The hardships of such a journey, together with the constant danger attending it, made the task a serious one indeed. All the Indian villages of the Sioux nation were visited, councils held on the open prairie, and after two months' labor promises were obtained that all the tribes visited would send large delegations to the grand council to be held at Chadron in August.

The entire commission assembled at Chadron creek at the appointed time. Captain Egan (since dead), with one company of cavalry from Fort Laramie, ac-



accompanied the commission, partly to assist in making the council an imposing affair and 'also to afford any needed protection.

A tent was pitched under a lone cottonwood tree, and a large canvas placed in front of it to keep off the scorching rays of the sun. Under this canvas sat the commission with Louis Richards for interpreter.

For miles around the prairie was dotted with Indian lodges, the number of Indians present being estimated at 20,000. Great herds of ponies were grazing near by, while Indians mounted and on foot were hurrying to and fro, and criers were haranguing the people to prepare for the great council—all tending to lend a weird appearance to the scene.

It was high noon before there was any visible sign of the Indians coming to the site selected for the council, and to an unprejudiced observer the "tout ensemble" of the commission presented an insignificant appearance compared with that of the 7,000 Indians present at the council and their gay and picturesque caravan. Presently a cloud of dust was seen in the east. Two hundred mounted Indians, decked out in paint, feathers and gaily-colored blankets, came charging down, all drawn up in line abreast

#### CARRYING LOADED RIFLES.

Five hundred yards away they halted and fired a volley in the air. Then on they came, singing and chanting their war songs, and rode twice around the tent, firing volley after volley. All this manœuvring was new to the members of the commission. The interpreter assured them it was the Indian custom on such occasions of splendor, notwithstanding the re-

mark of Senator Allison, that such a terrific display of firearms seemed unnecessary at a "peace" council. Presently another troop of Indians and another and another came, all going through the same performance, each band taking its position beside the others, with a distinct space between the bands. Fully *seven thousand Indians* were formed in a circle around the commissioners, and certainly a more gorgeous array of painted and feathered red men was never before seen.

Fully an hour elapsed after they were all assembled before the slightest evidence was manifest that they had any business with the commission. Then Spotted Tail came out from his band of Brules, followed by Red Cloud from the Ogallalas, then Two Kettles of the Sans Arcs, and others in their turn until some twenty of the oldest chiefs of the tribes formed in an oblong circle a hundred yards from the tent.

Pipes and tobacco were brought out, the Great Spirit was invoked, while they all sat in silence around the circle with their blankets gathered around them.

It was interpreted that they were deciding on who the orators should be. The fact was, no chief cared to broach the subject. It was afterwards learned that threats had been made by the Missouri river Indians that if those of the interior dared to offer their lands they would be shot down.

For nearly an hour the situation was unchanged and exciting in the extreme. Then came a prancing of horses on the south line, the column opened and in rode a solitary naked Indian mounted bareback on an iron gray horse—a lariat for a rein, rifle in one hand, the other filled with loose catridges, otherwise "fly-

ing light" as to the matter of baggage. The intruder was Little Big Man, a belligerent little devil from the north, who had suddenly appeared on the scene "unheralded and unannounced," and with a voice like the roar of a cannon he bellowed out: "I am here

#### TO KILL A COMMISSIONER

that wants to take my land away!" With a graceful gesture Spotted Tail waved the circle of chiefs away, a few Indians gathered around the intruder and he was hastily ejected for his great breach of etiquette.

This episode created a furore among all the bands, and in an instant all was confusion. Chairman Allison suggested that the whole affair began to assume a "business" aspect.

Until now it had not been noticed that Indians had taken possession of the line in the rear of the tent and in front of the calvary. Captain Egan pushed his way through, and addressing General Terry said: "General, your party is surrounded and my men are shut out. It looks ugly." This incident furnished the first excuse for looking about and I shall never forget the "bleached" appearance of the faces of the commissioners.

The interpreter, addressing the secretary, said: "It looks like h—I will be to pay here in a few minutes. The Indians are all mad, and we'll catch it the first ones." No one seemed inclined to dispute this statement. A wet blanket had fallen over the business in hand; the Indians had not addressed a single word to the commissioners and they in turn had nothing to reply. Suddenly a rush was made to the rear of the

tent and it appeared as if the row had commenced in earnest. Thanks to the bravery and wisdom of the young Ogallala chief—Young Man Afraid of His Horses—it was a beginning to prevent trouble. Young Man Afraid, seeing the danger, dashed into the crowd, summoned his Indian soldiers and placed them immediately in front of Captain Egan's soldiers, so the Indians' fire would fall upon their own people. It was an act of remarkable bravery and he followed it up by rushing out into the circle and ordering all the Indians to disperse and go to their lodges and not come into council "till their heads were cool." Almost instantly the Indians began skurrying away to their lodges, leaving the commissioners and Captain Egan's troops to saunter back to the agency.

It was three days before another council was called, and by this time the Indians had selected their speakers. The commissioners met them on the same ground, and business proceeded without interruption.\*

\* \* \*

#### **A HUNTING TRIP WITH CARL SCHURZ, WEBB C. HAYES AND ARTIST GAULLIER.**

Some time after the above incident, Carl Schurz then Secretary of the Interior under President Hayes, accompanied by Webb C. Hayes and Mr. Gaullier, an artist from Switzerland, visited the Indian agencies along the Upper Missouri river and came overland through the agencies of Spotted Tail and Red Cloud to Fort Laramie. On invitation I accompanied the party to the Laramie mountains. Two days were

---

\*This account of the meeting was written by me and published in the Omaha Mercury some years ago.

spent at the post. During a call the party made at my house. I related the saying of Spotted Tail "If you don't pray," etc. That it made an impression on at least one of the party was evidenced by what followed. N. R. Davis, a business partner of Clarence King, who was then at the head of the survey of the Fortieth Parallel, came from Cheyenne to escort the secretary and party to the mountains on a hunt for big game. Mr. Davis brought with him his own teams, tents and supplies. With him came Harry Yount, the hunter and guide; also, Charpiot, the famous cook, from Denver.

I was familiar with the trail and the country. and Hayes and myself with my span of crack broncos, that was at any time capable of seventy-five miles in one day and return the next, drove ahead of the teams to Point of Rocks, about forty-five miles, expecting the party to camp here the first night. They were not able to reach this camp and stopped sixteen miles behind at the foot-hills. We had our beds and a lunch in the buggy. Being in a game country and having killed an antelope, we were as independent as "a ship at sea," and contented as to our personal comfort. We laid our bed on the grass and slept "the sleep of the just." When the teams arrived the following day, the secretary reprimanded us severely for what he deemed a "foolhardy thing for two men to do alone in an Indian country." From the Point of Rocks we drove to the foot of Laramie Peak. Years before, the government set aside a timber reserve; a stockade was built, inside of which were a saw-mill and buildings for use of the soldiers and the men employed in cutting logs. When the saw-mill was moved to

Fort Laramie the place was abandoned. Soon after, a plucky cattleman named Frank Prager took possession, kept his horses inside and occupied one of the log buildings for living quarters. A war party of Sioux "jumped" him one day and drove him in where they kept him corralled for three days. There were no settlers nearer than Chugwater, twenty-five miles. Prager had a supply of arms and provisions, and "stood the Indians off" until they gave up the job of starving him out.

At the base of this mountain we made camp near a beautiful spring. When Webb Hayes and myself drove up with the broncos Mr. Davis met us and said, "Now we have got you in camp where our cook will get a whack at you and he will give you such a dinner that you won't be able to run away from us again." This was the first chance Charpiot had to convince anyone that he could cook any better than the ordinary mountain men. Secretary Schurz got out of his saddle and lay down on the grass to rest. When Charpiot announced "dinner," I remember the big laugh of the secretary, when he said, "Who ever expected to get clam chowder, fillet of beef and omelet, et ceteras—a seventeen course dinner—under the shade of Laramie Peak?"

After crossing the Laramie mountains, we skirted along the foothills just on the edge of Laramie plains and stopped at a fine spring near Duck creek. Here we found a rough cabin, with an opening for a door. Across this was a rope to keep animals from entering. A grizzly bear hide was nailed on the cabin walls. On the roof lay two freshly killed mountain sheep.

Frank Prager, the ranchman mentioned above, greeted us. I asked, "When did you desert the stockade?" "Oh," he said, "the d——d Indians made it too hot for me down there and I moved up here last spring." He offered us a saddle of mutton, (mountain sheep) and told us that two bears had paid him a visit the night before and tried to get at the mountain sheep. One of the bears came in the cabin and woke him up, and he took a shot at him. Then they left. "I have plenty of company up here, but some of them I don't want to have around," he said.

Our party drove west and up into the mountains, where we spent four days hunting elk, deer and mountain sheep with fair success.

The following winter I went to Washington, D. C. Webb Hayes called at the Ebbit house and took me to the White House, where I was a guest four days. The unvaried courtesy and kindness shown me by the President and his family was most cordial; including me in every event and entertainment the other guests participated in, which were numerous and most interesting. The President and Mrs. Hayes occasionally joined the party, escorted by Webb Hayes. Webb gave me his own private room. The furnishings of the room were not modern. They were old fashioned, substantial in quality and suitable in design. A long plate glass mirror, with gilded frame, reaching to the ceiling, rested on a marble base. Across the center of the glass Webb had pasted a sheet of letter paper, on which was written in his fine Italian hand, " 'If you don't pray before you eat, you won't steal.'—Spotted Tail."

## THE HUNTER'S PARADISE.

From about 1878 up to the time of the death of Major General George Crook, it was his custom to go to the Rocky mountains every October to hunt big game and it was my good fortune to accompany him on every trip for twelve years, together with a number of gentlemen he invited at different times. The party did not always include the same people and the locality was not always the same.

On one of these excursions in October, 1880, the party consisted of Ex-Governor Romualdo Pacheco of California, Webb C. Hayes, Major James P. Lord of the U. S. army and his nephew Russell Tracey, A. E. Touzalin and myself.

The Government pack train, stationed at Fort D. A. Russell, Wyoming, consisting of about seventy-five mules equipped with aparejos, in charge of Thomas Moore, chief packer and ten assistants, which together with a four-mule ambulance and a saddle mule for each of the party, was sent to Rock Creek station on the Union Pacific railroad, to carry the party to the hunting grounds.

Excepting Mr. Touzalin, who was to join us later, the party left the station about October 5th, camping at Medicine Bow creek the first night. The next day we traveled northeast to the spur of mountains at the head of Deer creek, arriving in time for an early dinner.

As we drove over the low divide and in sight of where camp was to be made, an hundred elk were lying down at the spring. They were of course greatly surprised at our sudden appearance and jumping to their feet sauntered leisurely away.



After the second day at this camp, Webb Hayes and myself went by ambulance to Rock Creek to meet Mr. Touzalin, leading four extra mules as far as Medicine Bow creek, for a relay on our return trip, to enable us to make the drive of sixty miles back to camp in one day.

We found the gentleman in his car waiting for us.

The next morning we made an early start, Touzalin accompanying us. A few miles out from the station we came on a broad plateau, dotted with scattering bands of antelope. The drive before us being a long one, we made no stop, but enjoyed the view as we drove on.

Arriving at the relay creek, we ate lunch, changed mules and lost no time in getting away.

A mile from this creek we saw a rare and beautiful sight, two young buck

#### ANTELOPES FIGHTING.

A dozen does and fawns were lined up looking on with seemingly as much interest as would a crowd of men watch a pair of pugilists in a prize ring. The bucks would rush together, push and jam with all their might and, as their position would change, the dainty does and fawns would move around to get out of the way of the fighters. When the bucks became exhausted they would break away, take a breathing spell and go at it again.

We watched this novel and beautiful picture some time, then drove on, leaving them with heads still together and about to give up the fight from sheer exhaustion.

After riding a few miles we came in sight of two

veteran buck antelopes out on the level plain settling a dispute between themselves. This evidently was the fight of their lives, its fierceness equalled that of two Texas bulls. With heads and horns together, noses almost reaching the ground, tongues hanging out and foam dripping from their mouths, they were so earnestly engaged we drove to within a hundred yards, so near we could see their glassy eyes bulging out and no attention was paid to our presence. Both seemed tired and willing to rest, both made frantic rushes at the same time, the sound of their horns when they met cracked like a pistol shot. It was remarked that we could walk within ten feet of the scrapping, and Touzalin thought to kill them both would be an act of mercy, but we had a long road ahead of us and no time to loiter so we drove away, leaving the fight unfinished. The object of this fight,

A LADY ANTELOPE,

stood on an elevation a few hundred yards away watching the contest with great interest. We arrived at camp in good season.

When General Crook came in one evening, he told us of having seen a band of elk lying down under scattering pine trees on a mountain side down near Bates' Hole. As the Governor and Mr. Touzalin had never seen elk in their native haunts, he was anxious they should witness them and he came away without disturbing them. The distance was about twelve miles, where the last of the pine trees grew and the mountains gradually sloped off to rolling bluffs and plain.

The next morning the party, including Mr. Moore and the packers leaving only two drivers in camp,

each with a lunch in his saddle pocket, mounted a saddle mule and followed the General on a somewhat silent march. Occasionally a black tail deer would streak across our trail, or a bunch of blue grouse fly up from the streams that trickled away from the springs, but so eager was the party to come onto the sights in prospect, not a shot was fired. Just before noon we came to a halt and dismounted behind a cliff of rocks. The General looked over all approaches to make sure of the game being there before bringing the party nearer. When our mules were securely tied he led us two hundred yards to a split rock, where one side had fallen and opened a seam for twenty feet from top to base, the opening wide enough for one person to see through. Just at hand was a small spring and here we ate our lunch. The General had taken a view of surroundings and found the elk were still on the ground where he had left them. He said nothing as to the exact locality until all had finished lunch, then he stepped to the opening in the rock and called the Governor to his side. When he retired each in his turn took a view of the picture. We were closer than three hundred yards and just across a stream was the band of

#### OVER TWO HUNDRED ELK.

Some were lying down, a few cows were feeding their calves, the bulls sauntered on the outer line of the herd prodding the cows with their horns to keep them close herded.

In every band of elk there is a thrifty young bull who lords it over the entire herd. If they rebel, he whips them into submission or drives them out. Other bulls that remain tamely submit to his lordship's

authority. The peace and quiet of it all and the romantic surroundings so impressed us that not a shot was fired. After viewing this living picture an hour we quietly stole away leaving the elk in the enjoyment of their solitude.

#### THE YEAR FOLLOWING

our tents were pitched two miles nearer the mountains at the mouth of a deep canyon, where the willows and quaking asp trees grew so thick it was impossible to walk through them.

As early as October there occasionally came a snow fall. No Indian, guide or hunter, possessed a more thorough knowledge, and took better advantage of the surroundings, or was able to select the very best spot to pitch tents to guard against all possibilities of discomfort than was our able and genial General.

When tents were up the sky was overcast, the wind in the east, and there were signs of a snow storm.

"Moore! pick out a place near the edge, clear away the willows and grub the stubble out for our tents. We may get good tracking snow for bear by morning," said the General to the chief packer.

By the time the tents were up and everything housed, the wind began to blow and it increased to a howling blizzard. Had we been out of the willows and in the open, not a vestige of our camp would have remained, but we were smuggled away and as comfortable as if in a house.

#### TRULY A RED LETTER DAY.

The next morning a foot of snow lay on the ground, and that is the day our General met his big grizzly

that raised on his haunches twenty feet away. When he opened his mouth to growl, a bullet went straight in his mouth, knocking out his front teeth and breaking his neck. It was also the day that Tom Moore killed his two cub bears, and Major Lord with Yeouille and another packer, whose name I do not recall, killed a she bear and two cubs.

I was out a day with one of the packers. We had crossed back over the range coming towards camp and dropped into a canyon that opened out on the plain. After traveling half a mile we found a dead cow elk on the trail, and as we followed down the canyon, came to another and another until we counted seventeen head, which only a few days before had been killed by a party of Englishmen who came over from England to visit some English ranchmen and cattle owners, and incidentally made a hunt to see how many head of game they could kill in America.

#### SEVENTEEN ELK LEFT TO ROT

no doubt was one of the bags reported to their friends back in England. This is a fair sample of the hunting followed by these people for years while the game was plenty and easy to kill. Is it any wonder that elk are diminishing and that the remaining ones have left their old feeding grounds?

The day of the successful bear hunt Mr. Touzalin was tired out and did not go out with the hunters. Later he saddled up and rode out alone in the sage brush flats after antelope, which was easier than climbing over the mountain chasing bear.

At a stream he dismounted to quench his thirst. Part of his trail rope was wound around the horn of his saddle and a few coils of the knotted end he car-

ried in his hand. When he lay down to drink, frog fashion, the mule evidently did not like his ungraceful attitude. The rope end he held pulled only on the saddle horn. The mule started out for the other side. Touzalin held on to the rope and was dragged head first through the creek. They parted company on the opposite bank and the mule started immediately towards camp. Touzalin's bump of locality was not well developed and if the mule left him, the chances were he would spend the night on the sage brush plain, an experience hunters sometimes have. Major Lord and his nephew had a night of this kind on this same trip and they both agree that it was the longest night of their lives. Touzalin managed to keep in sight of the mule and was guided safely in.

After resting a day he and I rode down beyond Bates' Hole and over the grassy hills—a part of the country we had not hunted over. Out on the ridges the wind was blowing a gale and it was difficult getting within range of deer or elk. Trails led in every direction. Suddenly we came to an old bull elk lying down on the edge of a ravine and out of the wind, sound asleep, only ten yards away. We were walking and leading our mules. Touzalin took the shot and his bullet hit high on the shoulder. This did not prevent the elk from jumping to his feet and starting over the hill. As he ran away I shot and broke his hip before he was out of sight. We crossed the hill and again came in sight as he hobbled away towards the creek. Here we sat down on a rock and fired a dozen cartridges. One of Touzalin's shots made him shake his head violently. Half a mile away he fell on the bank dead. When dressed and while

examining his fine antlers we found a bullet had gone through the trunk of one horn, making a hole as clean cut as if made by a gimlet. When butchered we tied a handkerchief on one horn to keep the wolves away.

On our way back we found an enormous mule deer under the edge of a bluff feeding. His horns were larger than any we had taken. By the time we dismounted the deer had started from the level down a steep hill. A bullet hit the base of one horn, sending him headlong with a broken neck. While I was preparing this fine animal, Touzalin caught sight of some packers returning with Major Lord and Tracey with carcasses of three elk they had killed the day before. They were a mile away. Attracting their attention the packers came to us. One of the men was Delany, well known throughout the mountains, and as far south as Arizona. A veteran packer and hunter. Four of the mules were packed with three elk, and to carry our big deer, the load on the biggest and strongest mule was distributed on the other three. Four packers lifted him to the mule's back. When in place, Delany remarked "that's the biggest deer I ever packed on a mule, he will weigh over three hundred pounds." By appointment two men had come down from camp with an ambulance to meet us at a creek and save a ride in the saddle for ten miles. While waiting in the valley for our return, a poor, wretched cow elk came down from the mountain side and in attempting to cross the creek, fell down and could not get on her feet again. The men killed her with stones. She evidently had been wounded or crippled and was not able to keep up with her band.

When the packers went after our big elk the follow-

ing day, although the carcass had been carefully dressed the meat had spoiled. Only the hide and antlers were brought in. The big elk horns were sent to J. M. Forbes, Boston, Mass., and used for a hat rack, and the deer horns accompanied them.

From the mountain slope behind our camp at times could be seen four or five bands of elk with three to five hundred in each band. A sweep of the eye over the plain would cover as many as two thousand. At the spring heads of the streams coming from the mountain sides blue grouse were abundant. On the sage brush flats were flocks and droves of sage grouse. Elk, mule deer and antelope were so numerous we killed only the bucks, and a number of fine horns were brought home as trophies of the hunt and were from time to time presented to friends of the hunting party.

Delany was a most persistent hunter. When he came in at dark after a tedious and fruitless ride and found six bear in camp he told his story of a long ride with no results and was as sullen as a Sioux Indian. He had seen "plenty sign" but no bear.

Tracks lead towards a long canyon that headed just at the top of the range and scarcely twenty feet away a canyon headed on the other side, leaving a passage way about the width of a railroad grade. Each day one of the party passed over this narrow passage and noted the fact that it was a fine prospect for bear. A canyon straight away from the creek to the summit, and a similar one just on the other slope. Delany had crossed this trail on his day's ride.

After supper he proposed to Mr. Moore that the entire party "drive" one of these canyons. All agreed and the next day the snow being gone, the entire party



hunters, packers and teamsters made an early start for the head of the canyon on the southern slope. The plan for driving the gulch was left to Delany. He formed the party in a line all abreast and moved towards the valley, whooping, yelling and making all the noise possible, keeping the line intact to prevent a bear going through in case we started one and it turned back, instead of going ahead. Bunches of brush, willows, tall grass, in fact about every foot of the ground that was not open, was gone over for a distance of three miles. The plan was well carried out, the disappointment was that no bear was started and we gave up the drive. The locality was dubbed "Bear Gulch" where "General Crook's party drove the canyon," and to this day the name clings to it. On our return each followed his own inclination. Delany and I crossed the range and rode down the other side. When about half way a noise was heard like the grunt of a hog, coming from a thick bunch of willows. The ground being soft and marshy neither cared to venture in as we could not see a foot ahead. On one side was a rock about twenty feet high and Delany climbed to the top of it while I went above to cross over the creek. Crack went a shot from his eighteen pound Sharp's rifle. There was a thrashing of the willows and more grunts. He had caught sight of a moving black object and without being able to distinguish what it was sent a bullet in as a messenger. The shot attracted my attention and I was soon at his side. A big black object lay in the grass and mud groaning and scarcely able to move. We sat down on the rock waiting for it to die or show some sign of getting away. When all

sign of life was gone we moved with great caution towards the object. The bullet had gone in under the ear broken the neck bone and passed out on the other side. It was a grizzly bear, so fat and clumsy it could scarcely drag its unwieldy frame faster than a slow walk. A rope was tied around its neck and to the saddle on a mule, but it was impossible to drag it through the willows. With our hunting hatchets a place was cleared away and the brute placed in a position for skinning where it lay. When the hide was off and the carcass rolled back on its belly, it had the appearance of a mass of white fat and did not in the least resemble an animal. With hunting knife, the blade four inches long, an incision was made just between the shoulders. The blade did not reach the meat. Curious to know "upon what meats had this, our Cæsar, fed, that he had grown so great," we examined the intestines and found in the stomach an oblong ball of *hard clay*, weighing at least two pounds. The bear was cut in four quarters, hung on trees, and left for the packers to bring in next day. Moore and Delany were of the opinion that the bear had licked a bank of sweet clay. Such places are often seen in the mountains where elk and deer frequented as they would a "salt lick." The bear having taken so much in his stomach there was no room for other food and on this he had become so fat he could scarcely walk. From each quarter a slab of fat was taken two to five inches thick. The fat alone weighed nearly one hundred and fifty pounds. The hair was in fine season, jet black and glossy. The tips shone in the sun like burnished steel.

Hair balls are occasionally found in the stomach of

cattle, but the hunters agreed that a mud ball in a bear's stomach was a revelation.

#### ELK IN POCKET.

While eating supper Major Lord said, "Collins, let's take an early start and go round the horn tomorrow." Deer creek broke through the mountains east of camp and came out on the plains north, running to the Platte river, near Wolcott station on the Elkhorn railroad. A game trail led along at the foot of the north side of the mountain leading to the plain west then crossed over to the south side, where General Crook had shown us the elk, thence east to the camp. The round trip was about twenty-five miles and the trip was called "going round the horn."

Through the rocky gorge, where Deer creek flowed north, was the only favorable ground for mountain sheep. Our field glasses were in constant use, but we found no sheep. After going through and following at the foot of the mountain on the north side about half way we met Touzalin and one of the packers. They were coming from the opposite direction having taken the trail going west from camp to "round the horn." Being fifty miles from habitation Touzalin soliloquised at our meeting and remarked, "How small the world is, let's eat lunch together and commemorate the meeting with a big drink of whiskey." The day was perfect, the air crisp and the sun behind a cloud. The mules were turned loose to graze and we threw ourselves on the green grass to rest, eat lunch, and enjoy the incident. In an hour we parted company, the Major and myself changed our plan and went straight up the mountain side through the pines to the summit, then down a valley leading to a rocky

canyon, where the trail grew rough and we had to dismount. While I stopped to tighten the saddle cinch, the Major kept on and got out of sight. I whistled and he came in sight throwing both hands wildly, and waving his hat. He was so excited he could scarcely speak. When his breath came to him he tried to whisper his explanation, but his voice could be heard a hundred yards. "We've got 'em in a pocket and can load the pack train right here and go to the railroad tomorrow."

We led our mules behind the rocks, and tied them within a short distance. We looked through an open space in an irregular wall of rock and the sight before us caused our hearts to beat double quick. Two hundred elk in a pocket and less than two hundred yards away! Behind them was a high cliff of rock, that had crumbled and broken away and fallen to form the ends. The formation in front was a long line of boulders and we stood in the only opening—a space twenty feet wide. The feed in among the rocks in the corral was fine. A spring came out of the rocks and ran along down through the opening where we stood. The elk were completely hemmed in. All threw their heads in the air, with eyes and ears pointed to us. Instantly they began moving about and realized there was no chance for escape. We calmly looked the herd over. There were cows and calves, spike bucks and bucks with every variety of horns, such as they were.

I said, "Major, there is not a fine set of horns in the entire bunch. What do you say to letting them file out in front of us? We are a long ways from camp and you know we agreed to bring in no horns

unless they were good ones." The Major was beside himself, "My God! what a picture, and so easy," he said. By this time the elk began milling, that is, going around in a circle. We stood aside to let them come out. They would make no move in that direction, while we were in sight. The elk were not nearly so excited as we were and we were puzzled to know what to do with them. While we stood in or near the opening they would not come that way. Again and again we would look them over for fine horns. They were mostly young elk. There were a few old veterans whose horns were irregular or broken from fighting, none being as symmetrical as those we had in camp. We sat down on a rock and tried to decide on a course of action. We had traveled nearly eight hundred miles to kill elk. We had hunted the mountain and plain over for ten days with only this in view. Here were two hundred at our mercy. An hour spent in watching them and not a shot fired or an effort made to bag the game we were looking for, but we had promised the General we would kill only for fine antlers. There were no fine ones in this bunch. So, much against our inclination, and having in mind the seventeen head killed by the Englishmen and left on the ground, to rot, we preferred to go into camp and relate our adventures and act in obedience to the wishes of the General that "no game would be slaughtered," rather than wantonly disregard them. As loth as we were to leave them we walked through the opening and around to one side and actually drove them out and away from us, without firing a shot.

The valley leading towards camp narrowed down for a distance and then widened out. A bar had form-

ed in the center covering several acres of loose rock and fallen trees, and grown up with small pines and underbrush. Our direction led us through this tangled wood. When half way thirteen old bull elk jumped to their feet and broke through the timber. We could see only a forest of horns. Among them some fine antlers. It was late in the day and as we were not able to get a shot at first sight we did not follow and left them for some future time.

It was a band of outlaws that had been driven out from several herds and formed a herd of their own to drift along the rocks and trees with no particular aim in life and without courage to stand their ground in contests with younger bulls, among the cows and calves.

\* \* \*

### **HUNTING BIG GAME WITH A PACK TRAIN.**

Early in September, 1879, General Crook invited Chief Quartermaster M. I. Ludington, who, during the Spanish war, was quartermaster general, (since retired), Congressman Thornberg from Tennessee, Webb C. Hayes, Captain John G. Bourke and myself, to join him on a hunting trip to Battle Creek mountains and Grand Encampment, Wyoming, fifty miles south of old Fort Fred Steele.

Thomas Moore, chief packmaster, with his assistants and seventy-five sleek roached and shaved-tail mules, had preceded us. On the arrival of the hunting party at Fort Steele, by Union Pacific train, we left by ambulance and saddle mules for the northeast slope of a mountain in the Sierra Madre range, and

camped at a fine spring at the edge of the pines with plenty of wood, water and grass, the packer's delight.

The hunting ground was in a belt of dense pine timber grown up with thick underbrush, and an occasional spot of windfalls and fallen trees, through which it was next to impossible to travel on mules. The only semblance of trails were those made by game. The hunters prospected nearly two days before getting the lay of the country, occasionally coming onto scattering elk or deer. The game was not wild, but the forest of trees was so dense and the standing pines so thick it required the greatest caution to get a shot. A section of the country through which we rode was a grove of quaking asp trees that extended north to the open prairie. A recent fire had left the trunks of the trees standing, but all the underbrush was burned away. On leaving camp the hunters separated and went in any direction they chose. Our camp was within a few miles of the crossing of the main divide of the Rocky mountains. Before reaching this we crossed Cow and Calf creeks running into the Platte river. Immediately over the divide was Battle lake on the western slope, and the mountain dropped off so abruptly that the top of the divide was within rifle shot of the lake.

We hunted around Cow creek and Calf creek and found trails of herds of elk and deer, but so thick were the trees and underbrush, that we could not travel fast enough to come up to the game. Occasionally a hunter would come onto a herd of a hundred or more elk, or a band of black tail deer, and would get one or two shots before they disappeared in the timber. When we reached the burnt quaking asp opening we

found antelope all around us and they were very tame. Antelope very seldom go into woods or brush, or among trees, but they were here in abundance and could be found at any time, so we decided not to disturb them until the day before we started for the railroad and then kill all we wanted in a few hours. Blue grouse were plentiful. We decided also to not alarm the bigger game by shooting at them until on the last day. Every day the hunters were out they killed elk or deer. If near camp the hunter would dress his game, leave it and go into camp and have a packer lead out two or three mules and pack it in. At times it was killed too far to bring it in the same day. In that case the hunter would dress the elk or deer, turn it back up, tie a handkerchief to a stick and stick it in the ground or lay it on the animal and the fluttering of the flag would keep the wolves and coyotes away.

One day Tucker, our guide, came in at noon and reported a band of a hundred or more elk less than two miles from camp, lying down on a bench on the mountainside, among them being a bull with a handsome set of antlers. I joined him and we set out at once. When within a few hundred yards of the band, Tucker in the lead, we approached cautiously to within reasonable shooting distance. They were all lying down except the bull with the fine horns. He had moved to the opposite side of the herd, and stood quartering with his tail toward us, not an easy shot to make sure of bringing him down at first fire. There was no time to be lost, however, and at a hundred yards I brought him down. In an instant the entire band were up and into the brush and timber and scurrying away, with the exception of one calf that made no move to join the



others, and stood broad side. Tucker dropped him in his tracks. With that a cow deliberately stepped out into the opening and stood over the calf in a defiant attitude. I accepted the challenge and a shot behind the shoulder laid her beside the calf. This little excitement diverted our attention from the bull for the moment and when we approached the spot the bull had disappeared entirely. After dressing the cow and calf, we took up the trail and followed the wounded bull for an hour but lost him. Here we ran onto General Crook, who had just come up from a canyon to see what the shooting was about, and here Tucker left us to go to camp for a pack mule and bring the game in before dark.

The General and I sauntered along leisurely towards camp. He had been out since morning and during the whole day had not seen any big game, although the woods were full of trails. Suddenly a bull elk which was lying down near a trickling stream, jumped up and stood looking at us, showing a full front, only one hundred yards away. The General was carrying his telescope rifle and resting the gun on the side of a tree, took deliberate aim at the spot just above where the hair curls on his breast—hunters call it the “sticking place.” The bullet went straight to the mark and we saw blood spurt from the wound. The elk did not fall but showed a violent shock when he was hit. So sure was the General that it was a fatal wound he did not fire again. The bull went by us within fifty yards and disappeared in the woods. Taking up his trail we followed it by blood left on the bushes and soon found him lying dead across the trail. When we dressed him we found the bullet had

gone clean through his heart and, by estimating the distance from where he stood when shot, he had travelled fully five hundred yards afterwards. It was the rutting season and the habits of this game were erratic. After three days in camp, at the spring near the edge of the timber, General Ludington, General Crook, Bourke, Hayes and myself, with a dozen pack and saddle mules, packers and two soldiers, started for Battle Creek lake, twelve miles distant, the pack mules carrying our camp equipment. Before reaching the lake one of the hunters shot a four months' old elk calf dressed it and left it hanging on the limb of a tree to carry with us on our return to permanent camp. Arriving at the lake, the party caught enough trout before supper for the dozen men.

While making camp, a lone mountain sheep came down from an almost perpendicular gorge of rocks, to the lake to drink. He stood looking at us over a thousand yards away, then put his nose to the water and satisfying his thirst climbed back up the rocks, and was in plain sight for nearly a mile. When evening came, the whistling of bull elk was heard. All through the night we heard the bawling of a cow elk, evidently the mother of the calf we killed on our way over.

The lake covered a space of about fifteen acres and lay on top or immediately over the Continental Divide. The water was clear and blue and said to be nearly two hundred feet deep. Through the almost transparent water hundreds of trout could be seen. At the casting of a bait dozens of the little speckled beauties would come to the surface with open mouths. Pebbles could be seen on the bottom in water twenty feet deep. The south shore sloped gradually up fully three-quarters

of a mile and was of bare, broken and scraggy rocks. From the shore of the lake above, half the distance up, the timber did not grow and it was thought by our party that we had crossed the range at about ten thousand feet above sea level. and that the bare rock was above timber line—eleven thousand feet, above which point no vegetation grows. It appears that all elevations above timber line are composed principally of rock. From the timber line the mountains broke away to the north on either side of the lake and formed a deep canyon through which the stream from the lake flowed finding its way to the Pacific ocean. There was a foot of snow on the ground. and the forest of pyramid shaped tall fir trees on all sides of us was beautiful in its garb of snow covered verdure.

Near the outlet of the lake stood a small log cabin, built the season before by Dr. Graff of Omaha, who represented some Omaha parties prospecting the mountains for minerals. On the door was inscribed in pencil the names of the parties who had visited the lake, together with a record of the trout they had caught, one item of which was a catch of near fourteen hundred.

The next morning the hunters started in all directions for big game and the score of deer and elk made by each one was entirely satisfactory. Captain Bourke took very little interest in hunting and remained at the lake to try his luck fishing.

When the hunters returned to the lake they found Captain Bourke up in a quaking asp tree on the bank. Bourke took no part in the hunting. and to while away the time in camp he borrowed a fish hook and a

piece of string from one of the packers and cut an alder bush pole to try his hand catching trout. The matter of a few trees behind the place he selected to fish from, made no difference to him, the result being that he landed his trout, hook and line in the tree nearly every time he pulled a fish out. When we came to camp he was unravelling his day's work.

The following day, to rest from four days' hard work, we all remained in camp and, as the inclination would strike us, would fish for trout. When a trout fly was cast in the water, a dozen or more open mouths would come for it. Nothing could exceed their eagerness to take anything thrown in the water. During the three days the catch of the entire party exceeded thirteen hundred trout, the average weight of which did not exceed two and one-half ounces, and in the catch there was not a fish that weighed four ounces. When we left for our permanent camp on the edge of the woods we packed the trout in two grain bags. Along the trail a small opening in one bag would let them slip out one at a time, and by the time we arrived nearly one-half the contents of the bag were gone.

On our way back Webb Hayes killed his first elk on Cow creek—a bull with fine horns. Each of the hunters made his kill, but the General as usual led them all in numbers. We made one day's hunt in the burnt woods for antelope and with good success, the total result of the hunt being several elk, a few deer and a dozen antelopes. The great rivalry was in shooting the heads off blue grouse. In this I tied the General. The trout caught by the party were all eaten before we left the camp at the spring. Two

days carried us back to Fort Fred Steel, where we took the train for Omaha, leaving Mr. Moore and the packers to take the packs and wagons overland back to Fort Russell. The scene of our then wild hunting is near the present site of the great copper mine and town of Grand Encampment. The country is now well populated and filled with prospectors.

\* \* \*

Buffaloes in their wild state are practically extinct. Since their disappearance the grazing grounds were occupied by cattle and horses and on these the bears and wolves subsisted. Now that the ranges are reduced, the number of cattle and horses are also greatly lessened, and the wild animals have migrated to Jackson's Hole, the Tetons and Wind river ranges. There are still great number of elk in remote regions where the average hunter does not visit. Black tail or mule deer will be partly protected by the government forest rangers, who are also appointed in some instances, as state game wardens.

The timid antelope is being pushed beyond the pale of civilization and will find safety in their increased wildness.

That prince of all Rocky mountain game, the mountain sheep, has been driven from his old haunts near the railroads and has taken refuge in the interior and in the higher mountain ranges of the Tetons and Wind river. The hunters of large game of to-day and of the future in the Rocky mountains, who may read the incidents herein related, all of which occurred about a quarter of a century ago, cannot help but realize the

wonderful change in the abundance of game then and at the present time.

\* \* \*

### THE SCOUT.

In January 1901, at the request of John T. Bell, then editor and proprietor of the Omaha Mercury, I contributed an article giving some of the characteristics of Baptiste Garnier, better known as Little Bat, the scout. This article when published was precluded by Mr. Bell. It also contained some illustrations that cannot be here included, hence it is a trifle revamped. The changes are by permission of Mr. Bell.

"The late General George Crook was one of the most distinguished of the many officers who served quietly enduring hardships of the most appalling character, suffering great privations and in almost constant danger. The American people have no adequate idea of the patient endurance, the heroism, the suffering which characterized life on the plains during an active campaign and when the story is put in print—if that day ever arrives—by a gifted penman, with a soul fired by a proper conception of his theme, the hearts of men and women will be stirred to the utmost—their love for and pride in the American army will be increased.

"In his latest Indian campaigns—1875 and 1876—General Crook had in his employ three noted scouts—Buffalo Bill, Frank Grouard and Baptiste Garnier. The latter known from boyhood as "Little Bat" was recently killed at Crawford, this state, by

a saloon keeper. From the date of his taking command General Crook included in his list of close personal friends Mr. John S. Collins of this city and during a period of many years they were frequently together in Wyoming and Western Nebraska in pursuit of big game. At various times the following well known men were included in these parties, A. E. Touzalin, Webb Hayes, Major Thornburg, Major T. H. Stanton, Ex-Governor Romualdo Pacheco of California, Major J. H. Lord and others. Concerning Garnier Mr. Collins told this story:

#### LITTLE BAT, THE SCOUT.

"In the killing of Baptiste Garnier, better known throughout the west as Little Bat, the country loses a character not only peculiar in habit and method but in many ways useful to the wild western country, and one that may never again be seen. His antecedents are unknown to me, but he was a quarter-blood Sioux Indian raised on the Laramie river. When a mere boy some thirty years ago he became famous as a stock tender, partly because of perseverance and knowledge of cattle and horses, but chiefly for his wonderful gift of

#### TRAILING.

"Never was an Indian born who could with more certainty follow the trail of a lost animal with the assurance of finding it. In 1875 Bat's home was on the Hunton and Bullock ranch near old Fort Laramie. When General Crook organized the 1876 campaign against the Sioux, Frank Grouard and Little Bat were selected as principal guides and

couriers. At the end of that war General Crook filed with the War Department at Washington a recommendation that both Grouard and Bat, on account of their valuable services, had earned a life position and that they be employed by the government as scouts to the end of their lives, Grouard at \$150 a month and Little Bat at \$100. Frank Grouard now residing near Pine Ridge Agency, Neb., resigned his position at old Fort McKinney near Sheridan, it is said through some misunderstanding with the then commanding officer, about four years ago. Little Bat remained at Fort Robinson and at the time of his death was in the employ of the government.

"During the year 1878 and later, Bat accompanied General Marcy, father-in-law of General McClellan, Seward Webb and Dr. Draper, on their many hunts for large game in the Rocky mountains. General George Crook knowing of Bat's wonderful reputation as hunter, trailer and rifle shot, first took him with us into Salt creek country for bear (Salt creek lying north of Casper, Wyo.) and so skillful did he prove, never failing, no matter what the character of the country was, to come onto the game and secure it—that the General afterwards did not think his hunting party complete without Little Bat. He and General Crook killed the last (three) mountain sheep in the Salt creek country, and Bat the last elk, a magnificent bull with fine antlers.

#### THE WOUNDED KNEE FIGHT.

"When General Brooke came to command the Department of the Platte, Bat at once became a favor-



ite of that officer and accompanied him in the Pine Ridge war of 1890. When Forsyth, in command of troops escorted Big Foot and his band on the Wounded Knee, halted to listen to the parley of the Indians, it was Little Bat who warned Forsyth that the halt was asked for only to begin trouble. A medicine man

#### THREW DIRT IN THE AIR

which was taken as a signal for beginning and in an instant the fight was on. During the excitement Bat had left his tent and ran with the Indians, when he turned toward the tent he had been occupying he saw this same medicine man standing at the opening with one of his own rifles in hand and keeping it hot as he joined in firing on the soldiers. In a few seconds this Indian fell into the tent which was afterwards set on fire and Bat found his rifle under the medicine man's dead body with the stock partly burned. This rifle had been presented to Bat by General Edward Hatch, formerly in command of Fort Robinson, and was used by him in all his hunting trips. Although it is a mooted question as to the wisdom of

#### WIPING OUT BIG FOOT'S BAND

western people do not agree, neither do they furnish the history that may or may not have justified the killing.

"In recent years Bat was the mainstay of Seward Webb and party on a hunt to Jackson's Hole. In the fall of 1899 Bat's record for bear killed by himself alone was eighty-three and as he later recalled incidents of his score, in the tent of A. S. Patrick and

myself, on one of our private hunts for big game on Salt creek, he remarked, "Now the bear all left this country, and gone to Jackson's Hole, maybe I wont get the other seventeen," to make a hundred.

"Frank Grouard in his life speaks of Bat as the most wonderful hunter and the best game shot he ever knew—capable of running deer down on foot and capturing them with a rope without firing a gun. On one occasion, while at Casper preparing for a start to the Sand Hills with General Brooke, looking up towards the Casper mountains, I remarked, 'Bat are there any elk left in Casper mountains?' to which he replied, 'I guess not. I was up there while ago.

I SAW SEVENTEEN AND KILLED 'EM.'

"I have been out with General Crook and Bat when a trail would be taken up by Bat on the baked soil of the Bad Lands, so hard that the soft foot of a bear would make no impression at all and yet the scout would follow a bear's trail over that character of country for many miles, his only clue being the occasional turning over of a bit of dirt or pebble, perhaps no bigger than a nickle, this bit showing up just a trifle darker in color on what had been the under side than the white surface all around it.

"On one occasion when out with Bat we started a deer. A shot broke its hind leg. A deer with a broken leg seems to get out of a hunter's way about as fast as if not crippled. We were on horseback and followed it two or three miles, then struck a rough piece of country where it was slow traveling. Bat, who was in my lead, saw we were losing ground, and left his horse—beckoning to me to bring it

along—and set off on foot after the deer, following it up a deep coolie and across a grassy divide and into another coolie two or three miles farther on, until the deer actually fell exhausted. When I came up an hour later with the horses, there sat Bat on a bank rolling a cigarette, ten feet away from where the panting deer was. 'There's your game, why don't you shoot it?' he said. But there was no necessity for shooting a deer that was only ten feet away, when I could lead him by the ears down the hill and kill him in a more sportsmanlike manner.

#### PUTTING UP A BLUFF.

"At one time I shot and disabled a bear which was rushing hot foot for Bat, only a few feet distant. I soon killed the bear, and when I afterward remarked, 'Bat, I think I saved your life that time,' the scout replied, 'Oh that bear was just putting up a big bluff.' On one occasion General Crook and Bat killed a bear in a hole in a cut bank twenty feet deep. Then it was a problem as to how the skin of the game was to be saved, which problem the General solved by going half a mile to the hills and cutting down and carrying on his shoulder a young pine tree with an abundance of branches. Of this he made a sort of a ladder by which the two descended to the dead bear. Then they built a fire of sage brush at the bottom of the hole which afforded light for their purpose and when they had taken the skin off they tied one end of a stout lariat to it and hitched the other end to the saddle of their riding mule which was above them, and thus hauled up the heavy pelt.

"If a few short-comings in business matters were charged to Bat they might be attributed to his not fully understanding them, as he could neither read nor write and his contact with men of affairs was, of course, limited. He was thoroughly honest. You could trust him with your property and rely on his promises. What he pretended to know, he knew, and his knowledge need not be questioned. Ask Bat, 'Can we do it,' and if he said 'Yes,' then leave it to his hands for he was sure to accomplish it.

#### EYES LIKE A CAT.

"One strong feature in his character stood out clean cut above all others—his wonderful bump of locality. Term it woodcraft, landcraft, or what you will, it applied the same. Land him blind-folded in a new country and he would go straight to his camp in day or night as the needle points to the north. In November, 1882, General Crook and his hunting party, accompanied by Bat, had been in camp on Salt creek for several days. Not finding large game plentiful it was suggested that we move over on the head of the Dry Cheyenne. Bat instructed the men in charge of the teams to 'follow a blind game trail over a strip of Bad Lands to a deep washout, cross, then keep along the divide to the head of a dry creek, follow it down to a point of rocks, then strike for a lone pine tree on the side of a high steep bluff, where we will camp.' He and the General cut across the country to look for bear. At dark they brought up at the spring where they expected to find the teams in camp, Mr. Hayes and myself with two Indians having already arrived. It was

then dark and no sound or sight of the teams. 'Do you think it possible for them to reach this camp tonight?' asked the General. 'You bet them drivers they lost their heads. I go find them and fetch them in all right, maybe near daylight' responded Little Bat. The General and party were toasting their shins over a huge fire of a standing pine tree when, about midnight we heard the refined and gentle voice of the government mule skimmers. In a short time, led by Bat, the entire outfit was in camp and the wagon boss, as he slid the harness off the last mule, remarked, 'That fellow Bat got eyes like a cat, see as well at night as in daylight.'

#### ROPING A DEER.

"When we were in camp on the dry fork of the Cheyenne, General Hatch wounded a black tail deer carrying enormous horns. He and Bat followed him a long time drifting towards camp. Bat could throw a rope equal to a cowboy. When the deer was about exhausted, he threw his rope over one horn and after a little bucking the deer quieted down and drove fairly well towards camp. It was slow traveling and the deer soon got his second wind. By a dexterous use of the rope, Bat threw him to the ground. Here he sulked and refused to get up for some time. The hunters worried him until he jumped to his feet and made a frantic dash for his liberty. Bat knew the possibility of the deer making a charge and warned General Hatch to be on his guard. When on his feet again they tried to start him towards camp, but he reared and plunged and refused to be driven.

"Then he braced himself with all four legs and put

his nose to the ground. Bat knew what was coming and called to the General 'shoot quick or he will charge my horse.' 'Stay with him,' said the General, who was not slow in getting his work in. At the crack of his rifle, the deer reared on his hind legs, and fell backwards dead. When they rode into camp with the handsome buck strapped on the horse ridden by the General's orderly, Bat congratulated himself on saving his rope, for to have it carried away by a deer would have been an everlasting disgrace.

#### RECOVERED THEIR HORSES.

"Back in '75' the country around Fort Laramie fairly bristled with hostile Indians. Scarcely a week passed that ranchmen, herders and wood choppers were not alarmed by small war parties raiding the stock herds. It was the custom of ranchmen along the Laramie river to turn their horses out in charge of a herder during the day and at night corral them in a pen built of logs, the gates being secured by heavy chains and padlocks. The herders always carried rifle and field glass and with the latter occasionally spied an Indian lying on top of a bluff scanning the prospects for getting away with the bunch of horses in charge of the herder. The camp to which the Indian belonged might be located a dozen miles on the north side of the Platte river. At night the war party would visit the corrals and if, through the carelessness of the men the gates were not securely locked, the entire bunch of horses would be taken out within a rod of where the men were sleeping, and once out of the corral with the stock it was useless to follow the Indians in the dark. The next morning the ranchmen would

follow the trail as far as the crossing of the Platte and then abandon it through fear that the Indians might be reinforced. One of the party would then rush into the military post and ask the commanding officer to send out a detachment of troops. The request was usually promptly complied with, but following a cold trail a day or more old amounted to nothing more than a long, tedious ride.

"One night in the month of February

#### A WAR PARTY

raided the ranch of Louis Reshaw, a halfbreed, nine miles up the river, and ran off his stock. Louis, with his brother, Pete, accompanied by the famous halfbreed scout and hunter, Little Bat, skirmished around among their neighbors, borrowed horses and started on the trail. A nine mile ride brought them to the Platte. The river was frozen over. The Indians had thrown sand on the ice to facilitate crossing the stock. One of the stolen ponies had given out and was abandoned at the crossing. The halfbreeds were hot on the trail, leading in the direction of the Indian agency. From the ponies' tracks it was evident that but three Indians were in the party. The stolen herd numbered five ponies, their total value less than \$100, being the stock left the owners after two or three recent visits made by the red men.

"Crossing the river the trail led over rocky bluffs and on through the canyon where Colonel Babbit, later on, erected his smelting works, in the now well known copper and silver district. Late in the afternoon the trail showed that the Indians were traveling slowly and would soon camp. Little Bat knew the

country well and he knew the water hole not far ahead. When the Indians want to camp and have fears that they are being pursued, they do not stop on reaching water but camp away from it. The halfbreeds knew their custom and laid plans to surprise them. The quick eye of Little Bat soon discovered smoke curling away from the Indians' tepee, a rude affair composed of a few lodge poles covered with cotton ticking, evidence enough that the Indians belonged at or near the agency. The halfbreeds held a council and then divided and approached the camp cautiously.

#### ONE OF THE INDIANS

was found seated on a rocky point commanding the best view of all approaches looking out, a second was gathering wood near the tepee, and the third was driving the horses down the ravine to water.

"The war party and their pursuers were equal in numbers and evenly matched and no time was lost in deciding the plan of action. Louis would take care of the lookout, Pete would have an eye on the fellow gathering wood, and Little Bat said. "you bet I get the horses."

"Crawling up within 100 yards of the lookout Louis crouched behind a rock and waited for Pete to get in position. The lookout was the only Indian armed, the other two having left their rifles at the tepee. It was agreed that no move should be made until sundown and just as the sun disappeared behind a rocky bluff a

#### SHOT WAS HEARD

and the smoke curled away from behind the rock where Louis lay. A yell from the lookout and he



scrambled among the rocks to a place of safety—shot in the leg. Pete took advantage of the wood gatherer and caught him 'away from home.' At the crack of Louis' rifle the wood chopper dropped his load and scampered to a hiding place among the scattering pines. Little Bat, rifle in hand, made a charge on the herd but did not shoot for fear of scattering the horses. Gathering up the lariat dropped by the Indian he mounted a pony and at once skurried down the creek driving the entire band of horses ahead of him.

"Pete had, as he expressed it, captured the camp and fired the village taking the only rifle at the tepee, powder horn, cap box, lance, jerked beef and medicine bag, (one of which trophies Louis gave to the writer the following day) and carried them to the rock where Louis was trying to get

#### A SECOND SHOT

at the lookout. Two or three shots were exchanged when the lookout called to Louis in a friendly way in Sioux. 'Don't shoot! I know you:'

"'If you know me, what in h—I you come and steal my horses for?' asked Louis.

"Pete said, 'Call him up to hold a council and I kill the d——d Sioux.'

"Bat had gone on with the herd. The lodge had been burned, all the plunder taken, one Indian shot in the leg, and the war party left afoot in the hills. It was now dark and the victors fifteen miles from home. Returning to their horses, Louis and Pete hurried on down the valley to overtake Bat, who was

holding the herd waiting for them at the mouth of the canyon. It was near midnight when the half-breeds reached their ranch with all their own stock, and five head belonging to the Indians.

"Last October the writer joined General E. Hatch's hunting party and camped on the south fork of the Powder river in Wyoming. and found this same Little Bat 'pegging down' a fresh bear skin he had taken that day.

"On this trip the writer took occasion to remind him of the incident related above. 'Yes, I see that Injun many times over at agency, he lame yet where we shot him in leg,' said Little Bat."

\* \* \*

### **"CRAZY HORSE" BONES.**

"Mr. Collins:—

"I want you to help me sell the bones of 'Crazy Horse.' They are petrified and are very beautiful.

"Your friend,

"\_\_\_\_\_"

The above is the substance of a letter in my possession. Crazy Horse was that troublesome Cheyenne Indian who was more active in the Sioux war of 1876 than Sitting Bull himself. When captured by General Crook he was taken to Fort Robinson, Nebraska, and confined in the guard house there to remain until the Indian war was ended and the United States government decided what disposition would be made of all the chiefs and leading Indians who surrendered or were captured. There were feverish days at Fort Robinson at that time. There were reasons for be-

lieving the Indians were organizing a force to make an attack on the guard house and release all Indian prisoners. Crazy Horse attempted to pass the guard and escape and in the melee was killed by a bayonet. His remains were buried near the garrison.. Some time after the burial the grave was robbed of its contents which were deposited in a remote place where they, no doubt, rest at the present day. This was done thinking the government would discover the robbing of the grave and offer a large reward for the recovery of the body.

No attention, however, was paid to the desecration of the grave and the remains lay hidden until about the time the above letter was written. Then the discovery was made that they had turned to stone—hence the letter above noted. Later, I talked with the party who could “deliver the goods” and there is no doubt but they are a remarkable curiosity. Anyone interested in such gruesome relics, by paying a good price could, even now, I think, procure the petrification.

As it was not in my line of business, I did not make an effort to dispose of them. Major John G. Bourke, John Finerty and Frank Grouard, the scout, have each written a book on the “ ’76” Indian war including a correct history of Crazy Horse and his following.

I believe this is the first item ever published referring to the above facts, which shows the peculiar effect of the climate of Wyoming on the dead as well as on the living.

In my possession is the German silver finger ring worn by Crazy Horse when he was killed.

## VAGABONDING WITH A GENERAL MANAGER.

When William F. Fitch was general manager of the Fremont & Elkhorn railroad, he was personally acquainted with nearly every owner of a steer or a sheep along the line, as well as a hundred miles away from it. He was out on the road for business about every week. The "cow men" and "sheep men" had the run of his private car, and in return gave him their business. There were times, however, when a little less company suited his taste better. When out on the road for work he dressed in a suit of corduroys, top boots, woolen shirt, and a broad rimmed cowboy hat with a leather band around it, and there were few finer looking men on the line than this kind-hearted breezy general manager. During the many years he managed the Elkhorn road, the event that he dated everything, that occurred "before and after," was a "cloud burst" in a sand draw out near Shawnee creek, that carried away five hundred feet of an embankment which was from ten to forty feet high, and the track went with it.

With an engine and his private car, he and Edmund C. Harris, his division superintendent from Chadron, camped at their work and killed antelope and sage hens at odd times. In those peaceful, happy days I frequently accompanied Mr. Fitch on tours west of Chadron and to the Black Hills. An engine and his private car was the train and just we two would sit out on the rear platform and shoot sage hens, the engineer would slow down and back up to bag the dead birds. They were so plenty it was easy for us to supply our table and have birds to bring back to

Omaha. I not only toured the Elkhorn road with him, but after he went to Marquette, Michigan, to manage the Duluth, South Shore & Atlantic road, we traveled together from Duluth to the head waters of the Mississippi river, to the lakes in Minnesota, Michigan and Wisconsin, to the Sault Ste. Marie, almost as far south as the Gulf of Mexico and to Idaho where we shot blue grouse from the peaks of the Saw Tooth mountains. He frequently came out to Nebraska to keep in touch with the many friends he left on the Elkhorn road in Omaha and to enjoy the fine air of his old stamping grounds and always brought with him one or two friends to show them what he called "God's country." On one occasion Peter White, from Marquette, a prominent and well known man throughout Michigan, came with him. Mr. White's reputation as a story-teller was proverbial, and his stories were generally fresh and always intended to be new. On this occasion I was also a guest. Mr. White was showing his best art in relating a story to a cattleman, presuming the narrative was new to the country. His listener did not crack a smile and was patient to the end; then he remarked: "Oh, yes; I heard that in Washington last winter." White's heart was almost broken, and to the end of the trip he did not recover from the chagrin of finding that a cow man out in wild Wyoming had already heard one of his pet stories. On this trip Mr. Fitch and myself went to look up his division superintendent, Mr. Harris, at Chadron, and left Mr. White in the car. At that time Horace G. Burt, who succeeded Mr. Fitch as general manager, was expected down on the Black

Hills' train for Omaha. Thinking he would come to Fitch's car, Mr. White was admonished that in case Mr. Burt called, to see to it that no liquid refreshment was in sight on the car, as Mr. Burt was a strict disciplinarian and it might be a serious mistake to even mention the subject. We were absent some time. Meanwhile the train from the Black Hills pulled in, and Mr. Burt immediately went to Mr. Fitch's car to look after the comfort of the guest of his road. On entering Mr. White explained Mr. Fitch's absence, and endeavored to lead the visitor into conversation and entertain him. Burt was somewhat restless and walked up and down the car nervously. Finally he said, "If this is Fitch's car, its the first time I ever saw it without some sort of liquid refreshments on board. Is there nothing to drink on this car?" "Oh, certainly," said Mr. White, and having a key to the locker, he immediately set out a package, called "Lord's Best Boon." When Mr. Fitch returned he found his guest waiting for him, and joined in the festivities.



## **GALENA, ILLINOIS, GENERAL GRANT'S OLD HOME.**

Pig lead by the acre was stacked on the steamboat wharf at Galena, Illinois, where, in 1841, my father, Eli A. Collins, and Jesse R. Grant, the father of General Grant, opened the first leather and saddlery store west of Buffalo, in a small frame building on a lot where the DeSoto house now stands.

Jesse R. Grant ran the small tannery at Bethel, Ohio, with hides bought in Galena, and shipped by stern wheel steamers and barges down Fever river, (afterwards changed to Galena river) and the Mississippi to Cairo, Illinois, then up the Ohio to the Bethel landing, above Cincinnati.

Chicago was then a village, with old Fort Dearborn, a fur trading point, few buildings and less population than the bustling lead mining town of Galena, situated seven miles from the Mississippi river.

Stern wheel steamboats and barges carried away the pig lead and hides to St. Louis and brought in the supplies to the metropolis of Galena—for metropolis it was, with no competing town, save the small village of Dubuque.

Wagons, with trails drawn by from twelve to twenty yoke of oxen, hauled the lead to the steamboat landing. Each "pig" was branded on the end with a letter indicating its ownership. It was piled "cob fashion" as high as a man could conveniently lift the weight.

The firm of E. A. Collins & Company bought pig lead, shipped it by stern wheel steamboats and barges down the Mississippi river to New Orleans, thence by sailing vessel to New York, sold it and made drafts against the proceeds to pay for purchases.

The dissolution of the firm of E. A. Collins & Company occurred in 1853 when Jesse R. Grant withdrew and opened an opposition store in the old stone Dowling building, corner of Main and Diagonal streets, with Simpson S. Grant, the oldest of the Grant brothers in charge.

While managing the leather store in the Dowling building, Simpson S. Grant's health became impaired and he was compelled to give up his business. It was soon after that Orville L. Grant came to succeed him. Later the Grant business was moved to the Coatsworth block, on Main street. W. T. Medary went overland with Simpson and drove to Minnesota, hoping to restore his health, but failed. Simpson died about the summer of 1861.

U. S. Grant came to Galena in 1860 when his career in the store began. When E. A. Collins, my father, quit business he sold the building and stock on Main street, near Hill, to Orville L. Grant and C. R. Perkins.

Henry Corwith opened the first bank in Galena. When he *could* supply eastern exchange to merchants it was in sums of one to five or six hundred dollars only, at a premium of five per cent. Occasionally an eastern man would drift in with a "one hundred dollar" bill and sell it to a merchant at the same premium. When used as remittance the bill was cut in two



pieces, one half being sent by one mail, and the other half going a week or two later. Occasionally a merchant would muster courage and take the stage for the long tedious ride of three to four weeks for Buffalo, the western terminus of the New York Central Railroad, and thence by cars to New York City, to buy goods. When such an event happened, the courageous passenger usually carried an extra satchel (carpet bag) filled with coin and currency for his fellow merchants.

As the inside of the coach was usually filled, the money satchel was sometimes thrown in the "boot" with the other baggage. Stage robbers were unknown; the country had not reached the advanced stage of "hold-ups" and "road agents."

The American House, a long two story frame hotel, on Main, near Hill street, was the stage office and headquarters for Frink & Walker's stage line. The eastern terminus was Buffalo, New York. The stage arrived twice a week, fairly regular and made every effort to arrive oftener with letter mail. Postage was twenty-five cents for each letter, and eastern newspapers three to four weeks old also cost twenty-five cents each.

So important an event as the arrival of the stage caused stores to suspend business and the merchants to gather around the hotel to "see the stage come in," carrying fifteen to twenty passengers, and the usual allotment of forty pound of baggage to each passenger, and twenty-five cents per pound for overweight.

The only water system the town boasted of was "Swansey," a negro slave owned in Missouri, who

drove a platform (two-wheeled) dray carrying three water barrels, furnishing the stores with river water, at fifteen cents per week for one bucket a day, and by his industry earned from \$1.25 to \$2.00 per day, for man, horse and dray.

In passing along the street it was not unusual to see shotbags filled with 5-franc silver coins standing against the store doors of W. P. Cubbage,—a most unique merchant—to keep them open. Quiet, peaceful days were those, with no robbers or “hold-ups.”

The lumber supply came from out of the Wisconsin and St. Croix rivers. The loggers and pinery men, the “Lumber Jacks” spent the winter in the woods, cutting and banking logs. When the ice went out, the logs were lashed in long narrow rafts and taken down the current to the Mississippi river, there to be pinned together to the size of an acre or more. Shelter for the rafters was built on the field of logs, where they lived. Long “sweeps” were put on the front and rear end for “rudders” to steer by, to the number of fifteen to twenty on each end.

Salt pork, flour, coffee and sugar were the usual provisions. Thus equipped, the entire winter crew embarked for their long run from the pineries to the mouth of the Fever river, where the field of logs was again put into small sections and slowly worked up against the sluggish current of Fever river to “Old Town,” and delivered to the small steam saw-mills. Here the occupation of the loggers ended.

Lined up in front of one of the levee stores, usually a “steamboat supply house,” dealing in cable chains and ropes, steamboat anchors, block and tackles, steam

pipes, etc., two hundred to three hundred of these rugged men, who for nearly a year had not been out of the woods, found the paymaster, who called off their names and handed each one \$300.00 to \$400.00 in a lump—a year's wages.

This was an event of no little importance to every merchant and business man in the town. The keys to the city were not officially turned over by the mayor. That made no difference, for the loggers took possession of the town all the same.

The first thing necessary was to "tog out" in a black soft hat; two or three suits of underclothing; red woolen overshirts, trousers and red topped boots; coats and overcoats were not a part of the wardrobe. Dressed in this fashion, restaurants and hotels were the next places of resort. After a "square meal" the town began to move. There was no war tax on whiskey in those days, fifty cents a gallon was the price, and five cents a drink. Gallon jugs were in great demand; squads of men were seen everywhere going towards the lumber piles along the river bank. Very little time was lost in "filling up" and soon the town was in a whirl; fights were "on" everywhere in the main streets; merchants "put up their shutters" and closed their stores to save the window glass. Stones flew as thick as hail. The town marshal, Tom O'Leary, organized his force of half a dozen constables and swore in every idle man he met on the street to aid in arresting the ringleaders and putting them in the "calaboose," which at times was taxed to overflowing.

To arrest a big crowd of money-spending logmen,

and in the end retain their good will, so that patronage would not be withheld, required a bit of diplomacy. The business men were equal to it, and quite frequently merchants would go personally and bail the offender out. This usually occurred about the time they had "sobered up" and there was no further need of their confinement.

It was at such times that Esquire Coombs, the Justice of the Peace, would sweep out his office, opposite the DeSoto house, where justice was dispensed, finish cooking his own meal in the back room, and then be ready to "hold court." The squire was a unique character; five feet and four inches tall, weighing nearly three hundred pounds and girthing as much as his height; eyes inclined to cross; stern of countenance, and a trifle surly of disposition. When on the bench, he was dignified enough for a judge of the supreme court, a "terror to evil doers," but withal most just and conscientious.

Sam Hughlett was a prominent and striking figure on the streets of Galena; six feet and three inches tall; of large frame; and a most jovial, easy-going, upright man; his word was his bond; generous to a fault; most unostentatious and quiet of manner; a valued friend whose rugged honesty and upright business methods were perhaps better known among the miners and merchants than any man throughout the lead mines. He owned the first smelter of Galena ore, and later owned all of the smelters and bought pig lead up to the time of his death, which occurred along in the early "sixties." He and the Corwiths were the dealers in lead in early days.

Nearly three hundred two-wheeled platform drays hauled the merchandise to and from the levee and stores, and a more loyal set of employes was never known. The drivers were the owners of their drays, one to half a dozen of which being regularly employed by each merchant and business house. It was a sight to be remembered—the hurry and bustle of shipping and receiving goods on the levee, with at times twenty or more “packet,” independent and “opposition” side wheel steamers, loading and unloading. He was a good driver to keep “in line” in the narrow crooked alleys of pig lead and it was a common sight for a drayman to get down and assert his rights with a dray pin or a black-snake whip in his effort to attract the attention of the “mud clerk” of the steamboat and have him “receipt for his load” in his turn.

Owners of the packet lines lived all the way between St. Louis and St. Paul. One was the Galena, Dubuque, Dunleith and St. Paul line, the other was the West Newton Opposition line.

A steamboat captain was a “king.” A pilot was a “prince.” The latter being known by an immaculate white ruffled and embroidered shirt front, a gay necktie, and a “sunburst” diamond pin, to which was attached a small gold chain with a plain gold pin to stick in the bosom for safety. The pilot’s pay was \$300.00 to \$400.00 per month, with one or two assistants and a “cub,” learning the river under him. When these distinguished men walked down the gang plank and stepped on shore, the ground trembled.

On the arrival of trains bringing three hundred to five hundred men, women and children, the boats

would immediately get up steam. Each boat had from one to three "runners," soliciting passengers, and the cutting and slashing of passenger fares would turn the heart of a railroad man of the present age to stone; beginning at \$12.00 for cabin passage, the price of tickets to St. Paul, not a few tail ends were carried on "deck" from Galena to St. Paul, for \$1.00, and many first cabin, including meals, for \$3.00 to \$5.00. It was cheaper to travel on a steamboat than to stay at home.

About 1854-5 the Illinois Central railroad completed its road to Galena. Then the emigration to Minnesota began. Twelve to twenty steamboats were loading and unloading at the wharves. When the big sidewheelers, the Northern Belle, War Eagle, Ocean Wave, Menominee and the West Newton landed at the wharves, the river was too narrow to turn around in and head out, so they had to back out as far down as the mouth of the river—seven miles.

It became necessary to dredge out a crescent shaped bank of earth opposite the landing to enable steamers to turn around and steam out head first. When the Illinois Central railroad was completed to Dunleith, the steamboat traffic ceased and from the increase of mud and decrease of water in the Galena river, that stream became navigable only for light draught small boats, skiffs, and the like.

The genial and warm-hearted young banker, the late John E. Corwith, was the possessor of a handsome steam launch, carrying ten to fifteen persons. A story is told by Mr. Corwith's friends—the entire truth of which I do not vouch for—that when the launch ar-

rived at Galena the river was very low, scarcely navigable for even this small craft. John was popular with Galenians and particularly with the congressman of the Northern district of Illinois, through whose efforts and those of M. Y. Johnson and the citizens generally the government was induced to put in "locks" at the mouth of the river and back the water up, increasing its depth, at least to the tonnage of the pleasure boat.

It became a common thing among the passengers on the Illinois Central railroad, as they looked out of the car windows, to enquire: "There seems to be no traffic on this stream from Galena to its mouth; what are the locks for?" "The government put them in to make the river navigable for John Corwith's pleasure boat; the only vessel on the river," was the reply.

This was Galena in early days, where General Grant came in March, 1860, to make his home. Today it is surrounded by railroads on all sides. A city built on "seven hills," the pride of the populace, and a delightful home for the sons and daughters of its pioneers, but in business and population, somewhat circumscribed.

With the extension and completion of the Illinois Central railroad to Dunleith, twenty-five miles west, the days of steamboating and the glory of historical Galena departed.

Eli S. Parker, one of General Grant's staff officers during the Civil War, was a full blooded Seneca Indian and then chief of the "Six Nations." By profession he was an engineer; a man of splendid physique, standing six feet high and weighing over two hundred pounds.

As superintendent of construction for the government, he built the postoffice in Galena in 1857-58. During his two years' residence there he was immensely popular, contributing his valuable experience to all the city's public affairs, as well as to all social entertainments, where he was a great favorite. He was an enthusiastic sportsman and a fine field shot. It was the writer's good fortune to have spent many a day in field and marsh with him, greatly enjoying the companionship of this gentlemanly and jovial hunter.

William R. Rowley, on General Grant's staff for a short time and a close companion later, left the office of county clerk for Joe Davies county, to join the army.

John A. Rawlins, Grant's chief of staff, and later his Secretary of War, was the law partner of David Sheean, Esq., now, as then, one of Galena's most honored citizens, and a talented attorney.

Another Galena citizen and friend of General Grant, was General J. E. Smith. Before the war he was a business partner of J. W. Safely. General Grant's first visit to Galena was about 1853, while touring the upper Mississippi. A St. Louis steamer, on which he was a passenger, ran into Galena near midnight and the General took this occasion to walk to the home of E. A. Collins, my father—the only man he knew in town—a distance of three miles.

The General's first war horse, a chestnut gelding, was sent to General Smith after the Donaldson fight; later he was turned over to J. A. Packard, and was the first horse he used in the war. His bones rest somewhere among the "seven hills."



General Grant did not live in Galena very long. Quiet, unobtrusive, he was a stranger in a strange land, entering upon a new life. It was not strange that after many months' residence, scarcely a dozen families knew of the existence of himself and family. One evidence of this was that the retail merchants and grocery men did not venture to run a family supply account with him. Thomas Gilston, then a retail grocer on Main street, near Hill, declined to send a barrel of flour to his home without spot cash or payment guaranteed. E. A. Collins guaranteed the bill and the flour was sent. After this incident, no guarantee was necessary.

Grant drove a span of black ponies that could step along at a lively gait and it was his custom on Sunday to drive with Mrs. Grant and the children for Sunday dinner to the home of E. A. Collins. On week days scarcely a day passed that he did not visit the store of Mr. Collins and he was always smoking.

Destiny that shapes the ends of all mankind soon changed the career of this most modest, quiet man. I recall a time after Fort Sumpter was fired on, that E. B. Washburn, a republican congressman from Northern Illinois, was particularly active.

The War of the Rebellion was on, politicians were straining every point to get "to the front," meetings being held every night for the organization of companies of troops. More especially was it noticed that the politicians were patriotic and eager to care for the welfare of their country, if they could get a good commission, running all the way from a captaincy up.

In this hurry and scurry of patriotism the name of U. S. Grant was not mentioned. On leaving the store

one day at noon, near Main and Hill streets, I was with my father when he met E. B. Washburn. There was a wide difference in politics between the two men and relations were greatly strained. This, however, did not deter Mr. Collins from approaching the congressman in this way: "Washburn, you and your political friends in all your activity in calling meetings, raising troops and appointing officers, evidently are not aware of a man in your midst that has been educated by the government, and having served under Zack Taylor in the Mexican war, knows something about practical warfare." "Who is this man?" inquired Washburn. "Ulysses S. Grant," said Mr. Collins, "whom you all pass on the street every day and do not know." "If that is so," said Washburn, "I will look him up." At the next meeting at the court house for the purpose of enlisting troops, Grant was called out of the audience—for he attended nearly all the war meetings—and invited to the platform. At the end of this meeting, Grant was appointed to the distinguished position of drill master of newly enlisted men.

To my certain knowledge this was the beginning of General Grant's career in the War of the Rebellion.

It is astonishing the alacrity with which hundreds of Galena people suddenly "knew Grant," and as time went on the number increased until almost every man in Joe Davies county remembered that they of course, "knew him all the time."

\* \* \*

#### THE METTLE OF GRANT.

F. A. Eastman, for the *Chicago Chronicle*, in a long interview with John H. Alden, in December, 1902, a

former resident of Galena, later of St. Paul, Minn., referring to E. A. Collins, has this to say:

"This reminds me of a little circumstance illustrating Grant's loyalty to his friends, a trait that never deserted him. This was so graceful, so brave, an evidence to those who were true to him when the days were dark, that it deserves mentioning. Now, Mr. Collins was a democrat, and what little politics Grant gave expression to was in dead opposition to everything savoring of abolitionism. Mr. Collins liked Grant's direct, quiet way of doing things, so he gave him what assistance he could, and Grant needed it.

"During the war Grant made numerous tenders of positions to Mr. Collins, but that gentleman would accept none of them. All were declined with thanks. Immediately after the election of 1868, President-elect Grant wrote to Mr. Collins.

"I have handled and read that letter, and as near as I can recollect it was worded like this:

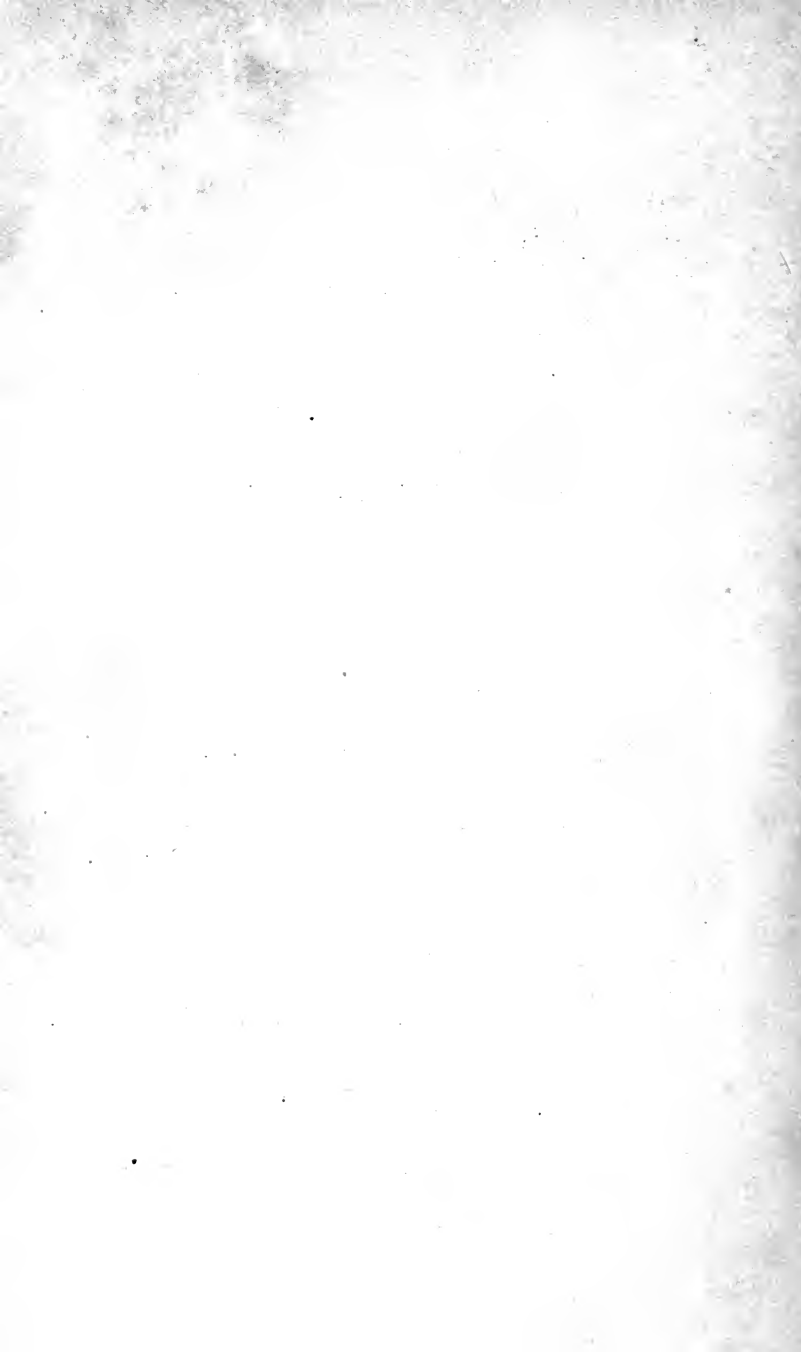
" 'Dear Mr. Collins: I have just been elected president of the United States. There is but one office that I have thus far pledged myself to bestow upon any man and that is the Secretaryship of State to the Hon. E. B. Washburn. You may name the man for the second office,

Your friend,

" 'U. S. GRANT.' "

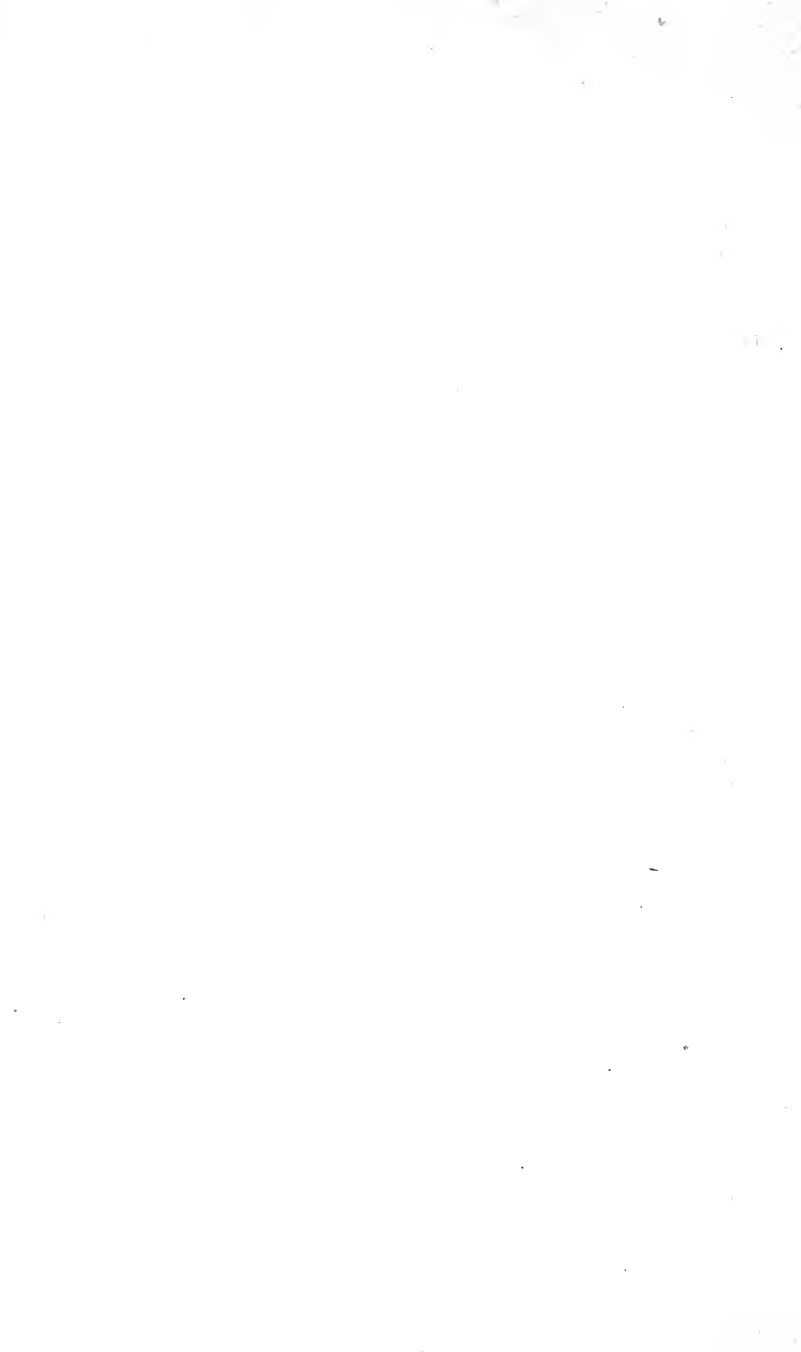
Mr. Collins never took advantage of this tender of the new president, either for himself or for a friend."







"Five Terrors of the Wind River Range," just returned from Bear Hunt.—General George Crook (seated). From left to right, John S. Collins, A. E. Touzalin, General F. H. Stanton, Webb C. Hayes. (Photograph taken at Fort Washakie, Wyo., fall of 1886.)—See page 70.



## PART II

COPYRIGHT BY  
ROBERT F. GILDER  
1911



## CONTENTS—PART II

### STORIES OF THE PLAINS—

OLD FORT LARAMIE.....	5
PHILLIPS' ACCOUNT OF THE KILLING OF POWELL.....	12
CATCHING TROUT THROUGH THE ICE.....	16
"HE LOOKED LIKE THE BOSS OF A MULE TRAIN"...	18
A COWBOY WEDDING.....	21
HOW THE BUFFALO DISAPPEARED.....	26
CALIFORNIA JOE—WHO BROUGHT IN THE MULE? ....	28
A MAN WITH NERVE.....	34
THE KILLING OF HUNTON.....	36
MOSQUITOS.....	42
SCALPED BY THE SIOUX.....	44
THE RATTLESNAKE.....	45
HOW ANTELOPE KILL SNAKES.....	46
JIM BRIDGER.....	46
HOLDING UP A U. S. MARSHAL.....	47

### HUNTING STORIES—

WILD GOOSE HUNTING ON THE PLATTE RIVER.....	51
INDIAN SYMPATHY.....	61
LOST NEAR CAMP.....	65
IN THE SAND DUNES.....	68
A WATERHAUL IN THE WIND RIVER RANGE.....	70
ANTELOPE HUNTING.....	75
HOW TO PACK A BEAR TRAP.....	79
OUT ON THE TEAPOT BAD LANDS.....	81
INCIDENTS.....	85

## CONTENTS—PART II—CONTINUED

### MISCELLANEOUS STORIES—

WORKING FOR WAGES.....	89
IS THIS CONSCIENCE MONEY?.....	89
HUSTLING.....	90
THE SQUAW MAN.....	90
DOWN THE MISSOURI RIVER ON A STEAMBOAT.....	97
THE PACK TRAIN.....	100
WILD BUFFALO IN A CATTLE PEN.....	101
"JANE".....	102
SIDE LIGHTS ON A GOLD MINING CAMP.....	103
A MINERS' BREAD RIOT.....	107
LIVELY STAGING IN THE WEST.....	109
GUARDING A PRISONER.....	112
A NEZ PERCES SQUAW.....	113
SIXTY THOUSAND DRESSED BUFFALO HIDES.....	116
WEIGHING A GRIZZLY BEAR.....	119
LAKES AND WOODS OF WISCONSIN.....	121
SAN FRANCISCO EARTHQUAKE AND FIRE.....	133
A MARINE'S STORY.....	145
THE BATTLE OF SUMMIT SPRINGS, NEBRASKA, JULY, 1869.....	148

## **STORIES OF THE PLAINS**

### **OLD FORT LARAMIE.**

This historic old military post, at the time of which I write, had been occupied by United States troops over 60 years. Previous to this it was an important point for the fur traders of British Columbia, Western Canada, New Orleans, St. Louis, and, in fact of the entire west, and was known as Fort St. John. From the time it was occupied by the United States military arm, nearly every officer and enlisted man in the army, from the year 1845 up to 1900, both cavalry and infantry, had visited there. The Fort was built for six or eight companies and later enlarged for a regiment, because of its being located in the heart of the great Sioux Indian country. It had protected the Mormons on their pilgrimage to the Great Salt Lake, the California emigrants of '48 and '49, the various Indian commissions treating with the Sioux, as well as the travel to the Black Hills. It was at Fort Laramie that General George Crook, commanding the Department of the Platte, fitted out his great army against Crazy Horse and Sitting Bull in 1875-76. The post has since been abandoned, the buildings sold, and at this writing it has assumed the proportions of a small village.

During my stay of twelve years at the post scarcely a day passed that did not reveal some item going to make western history. During that time I

recall these officers: General John E. Smith, Colonel Townsend, General L. P. Bradley, Julius Mason, A. W. Evans, Jesse Lee, John Mix, Leonard Hay, Sammy Munson, Teddy Egan, Captain Collier, Lieutenants Allison, Seaton, and others, who had been in command of the post or of various companies. The post, too, had been visited by the Sheridans, the Shermans, General Thomas, General Curtis, General G. M. Dodge, and if the names could be emblazoned on a monument erected on the old parade ground, and the reservation be set aside as a government reserve park, commemorative of one of the oldest and most important military posts in the United States, not a taxpayer in this broad land would begrudge his small contribution to the fund.

But there is too much politics, both in the house and senate of the United States to take an interest in such a trifling thing.

I was post trader at Fort Laramie for twelve years. The soldiers during my stay were a rough, devil-may-care assortment from all states. Many of them were refugees from justice, some had been former penitentiary convicts, and nearly all were as tough a lot of men as could be sifted through the mesh. To them no service was a hardship, no order too strict to obey; scouting for Indians, sleeping without tents in the coldest weather, wading through mud knee deep, and frozen streams and snow. When the march was over for the day many of them were employed by officers to pitch tents, cook, make beds, carry wood and water and prepare meals, for an additional compensation of \$2.00 to \$5.00 per month over the regular pay of an enlisted man, of

\$13.00 per month. These were designated by others of the company as "dog robbers."

Along in '75 and '76 the Indians were at their worst. Later came the "road agents," and it was an uninteresting day that did not bring some event worthy of record. Some of the "bad" men of the country found employment at the ranches nearby. It seemed beyond the ability of that stripe of off-scourings to lead a fairly respectable life and keep their own council, and when payday came around it was the rule to come to the post and get gloriously drunk. With a Colt's revolver in one bootleg, hunting knife in the other, and carrying a reputation as a "bad" man, respectable people were on their guard. If the clerks in the trader's store did not come in contact with them at the height of their rage it was considered a quiet day. To the credit of these clerk employes of mine, with good judgment and plenty of "sand," the very toughest of the "bad" men could be wallowed in the mud in front of the store for any great breach of conduct. The calling of the sergeant of the guard or officer of the day sometimes landed the toughest in the guard house, and when they sobered up they were usually quietly led off the reservation in front of a bayonet point never to return.

One amusing incident was when a tall, slim Yanctonai Indian drifted in from the Standing Rock agency on the Missouri river. He was togged out in a flimsy remnant of a buckskin shirt, leggings, badly worn moccasins and brass wire armlets, presenting the appearance of an aboriginal tramp. He at once began a speech in Sioux which no one could

understand. Baptiste Pourre, generally known as "Big Bat" the scout, living six miles up the river, was the post interpreter and came down only when ordered by the commanding officer, or to the commissary for supplies. The Indian addressed himself to everyone, individually and collectively, about the store, talking his gibberish in a loud voice and exhibiting apparent distress. General L. P. Bradley, commanding the post, chanced to pass the store door and hearing the racket came in to see what was up. The Indian immediately turned on the officer and began a new speech and he held the general down to it until he was through. The general at once dispatched a courier for the post interpreter to learn if he could understand what the Sioux had on his mind, evidently believing that it must be something of a serious nature. It happened I was the main victim, having been pointed out as the storekeeper.

The orderly and Bat soon came in together and the Indian's parley was begun again. He fairly danced with joy when he found someone who could understand his language. After a few moment's conversation Bat turned to the general and said:

"This Indian came from the Standing Rock agency on the Missouri river. He came alone to see the soldiers and the storekeeper and the big white chief. He is very poor and hungry and wants to go back tonight to Red Cloud's camp. He lived here when he was a boy, raced horses and played games, and there were many buffalo along the river, and his people were as thick in the country almost as the blades of grass, and he wants the storekeeper

to give him a dress and some beads for his squaw, some raisins for his children and tobacco for himself."

Turning to me General Bradley said:

"Collins, this important business seems to be up to you. When you get through with your friend, the interpreter will direct him out of the post."

To this I replied:

"He need not be detained on my account. Bat can take him at once."

One of the clerks bundled up ten yards of calico, some beads, tobacco and raisins. The Indian shook hands all around and said "How" to everyone in the store and was shown the way down to the bridge and across the river.

\* \* \*

A few miles above the post on the Platte river, just below the canyon and near Whalen's ranch was a cataract in the river which was a great fishing place. In season I made frequent trips to this point, usually meeting with great success, taking from twenty-five to one hundred pounds of wall-eyed pike weighing from one to five pounds each. Dr. Grimes, then contract surgeon at the post, accompanied me on one of these trips. On returning we came near the "4-P" ranch, where a high ledge of rocks hung over the road, the highway being in reality the old California trail on the north side of the river. Wind and rain had cut away the soft sand rock on the road level, leaving dark and open spaces or shelters under the ledges. Coyotes made their dens there and bones of animals were scattered about in profusion. A bundle of red blankets at-

tracted our attention, and on investigation we found a "good Indian" wrapped up and carelessly pushed into one of the holes. We called him a "good Indian" because he was a dead one. The living Indians were then at the very pinnacle of their devilment, stealing horses and cattle, burning wagons, killing every belated teamster or traveler who came their way. They were not good Indians.

From the careless way in which the bundle was pushed under the ledge, the body had evidently been placed there at night, the fellow having been killed in some skirmish with white men who were defending their stock, and the body had been carried as far as could be by his companions in the raid, who, perhaps expected to return and get it the earliest opportunity. A few days later some prospectors passed by the spot where the body had been cached but saw nothing of it.

\* \* \*

When cowmen wore \$30.00 Stetson hats, with leather bands, high-heeled boots to prevent being caught in the stirrup and to dig into the dirt after they roped an animal while on foot; leather "chapps," as protection for their legs in brush as well as for warmth in winter; braided quirt; leathern cuffs to protect wrists in roping; leathern shirt bosom; a No. 130 "Collins" saddle, or, as more extravagant taste would require, a saddle costing from \$75.00 to \$100.00; \$1.25 bridle; Mexican inlaid silver spurs costing \$25.00, and a \$30.00 bit of the same material; they generally placed them upon a \$25.00 or \$30.00 cow horse. This was not the only use for an outfit costing all the way from \$75.00 to \$200.00.



Anything with the name "Collins" from Cheyenne, Omaha, or from our stores along the Northern Pacific, in Montana, would always pass as current as gold coin on the range at more than their cost.

Even President Roosevelt learned to value such articles as the most appropriate for use on the range and in handling cattle and horses, and our strenuous president did not stop at the range either to find out other uses for leather work with the stamp "Collins" upon it. When later he went to the southern states to join the fashionable riding clubs and follow the hounds it was he who suggested the cowgirl "Collins" saddle, and in order to show the faith he had in it he at once ordered them with money from his own purse. Among all the thousands of customers and cowmen whose names were on our books there were none more agreeable to us or more appreciated and valued than President Roosevelt. Should these pages ever reach his eye no doubt they will remind him of the jolly rough-and-tumble life of cow camps in the piping days when he followed the trail at Medora, Montana, on the Little Missouri, of the longhorns from his ranch, when he was "one of the men" of that country.

I have said a "Collins" cowboy outfit costing, perhaps, \$200.00 would pass as current as would gold coin with all cowmen on or off the range. This outfit was considered a star "buck" in the favorite game of poker, played nightly around a camp fire when the last wage check had changed to the winner. In fact anything made of leather would go at par or at a premium in such a game, such was the character of horse equipments made by us—because

the cowmen required the goods and they would pay the price.

There are many "Collins" equipments still on the ranges of Texas, Oregon, the British possessions, and other parts of the west, made thirty years ago.

\* \* \*

### PHILLIPS' ACCOUNT OF THE KILLING OF POWELL.

The following incident shows the good-fellowship, loyalty and neighborly interest of the early settlers on the Laramie river in the '60's and '70's, when the Indians menaced every white settler who came onto the Laramie and Platte rivers, for a hundred miles around.

The killing of Powell occurred in 1872. Powell was a quaker, driving a herd of cattle north to find a safe range for winter, and later to make sale of his herd. In the fall of '71 a snowstorm caught him with his herd near the mouth of the North Laramie river, where he built a cabin and corrals and wintered. A man by the name of Frazier and three other men made up his party when he made camp. Powell and his men were always on the alert in watching their herd, because they knew that Indians swarmed about them, killing cattle to eat and watching every opportunity to steal horses. The vigilance of this party of four men was unabating, and this same vigilance led to the death of Powell.

Leaving his camp after a snow storm in charge of the four men, he started out alone on a fine mule that was shod to ride through and around the cattle

and see if the storm had scattered them badly, and also to see if he could pick up the trail of his stolen horses that were taken by the Indians before a snow storm of a day or two previous. When evening came and he did not return to the ranch, the men in camp became uneasy, and Frazier rode down to the ranch of F. M. Phillips, one of the early settlers who furnished beef to the military post, and who lived at the mouth of the Chugwater on the Laramie river only a few miles away, to ascertain if Powell had been seen in the vicinity, there being few other settlers between there and Laramie. Phillips was at home, and after hearing the story of Frazier, concluded that Powell had been taken in by the Indians, for it was only the night before that they ran off some of Powell's horse stock. As Powell was a sober, industrious and reliable man, Phillips' idea was at once accepted—that the Indians who had run off the horses and held them near by, were expecting the owner would follow and that they would capture or kill him, take his saddle horse, then supply their want of beef, and get out of the country before the alarm was given and any one could follow them. Phillips immediately saddled a horse and rode to Fort Laramie, a distance of nearly twenty miles. General John E. Smith was in command and Phillips called on him at once and told the story of Frazier and asked General Smith to send a sergeant and a few men and he would go with them and try and learn the fate of Powell. It was supposed that the military was stationed at Fort Laramie for two reasons only, viz.; to protect settlers and to guard the emigrants.

going west. One hundred and fifty Indians were in the post on that day peacefully trading at the store, and General Smith presumed that the incident related by Mr. Phillips must be untrue. He would not believe that any war parties were out, while Indians were peacefully trading at the post, and flatly refused to allow any soldiers to leave the garrison. For his error of judgment in this matter the settlers blame him to this day.

"Well," said Phillips to the general, "if you won't give us any assistance I will raise what few men I can on the river, who I know will not refuse to go, and I will go with them and we will try to protect ourselves. Perhaps on our return we will show you that we are right."

There were a few cowboys working at the ranches along the river, and when Phillips told his story four of them volunteered to go and immediately saddled their ponies to accompany him. It was nearly dark when the party arrived at Phillips' ranch, and here they remained all night.

The next morning at daybreak they were off for Powell's camp to see if he was still missing. Having no tidings, they took up the trail of the shod mule ridden by Powell and followed it in the direction of Cottonwood creek. Here they were attracted by a bunch of coyotes hiking away from a thick bunch of brush, and also a flock of magpies hovering around, which led them to the carcass of an old bull the Indians had killed and feasted on the day before. Here they also found the trail of the loose stock Powell had evidently been trailing. The remains of a fire, pony and moccasin tracks were numerous.

Powell evidently followed the trail of his lost stock to this point, and here the Indians captured both him and the mule he rode. There were signs where they had made "medicine" by rocks heated and covered by a small tepee; this was to decide whether they would carry him away alive or kill him and leave no chance for his giving the alarm.

Trails ran all together, but the five men were experienced in the arts and wiles of the Sioux, and making a circle around the camp ground, found where the shod mule ridden by Powell led out from the Cottonwood, with pony tracks of an Indian on each side of the mule trail. Evidently the Indians were afraid to turn Powell loose lest he give alarm before they could get out of the country. The trail led to Fish creek, a dry stream bed, and a wide sand draw, and out on the bank of boulders. It was evident that the Indians had made Powell a prisoner, and up to that time had not decided what disposition they would make of him. It was evident, also, that the Indians left behind had later followed the same trail.

Just across the big Fish creek sand draw, among some boulders, Phillips came to the body of Powell, lying on his face, with legs and arms extended, scalped. Two arrows were sticking in his back, and the back of his skull was crushed in as if done with a rock. They carried the body on a horse to Phillips' ranch, and the next day took it in a wagon to the post to get the quartermaster to make a coffin to bury it in. Then Phillips went to report the finding of the body to the commanding officer and told him the circumstances and added: "If we had had

ten or fifteen soldiers, we could have overtaken and captured the Indians before they reached the Platte river." Powell's body was buried at the post. The number of horses he lost was thirty to thirty-five head. Powell's home was in Conconaski, Kansas. Sanborn & King, attorneys in Washington, later made a claim for the stock for his relatives, but the result I do not know.

\* \* \*

### CATCHING TROUT THROUGH THE ICE.

A short bow-legged fellow about thirty years old, weighing less than one hundred pounds, came to me at "Silver Bow." His story was brief, but had the merit of frankness at least. He said: "I've been a sailor eight years before the mast on a cooley ship, living on 'duff' until a square meal would surprise my stomach. Left the ship at San Francisco, walked half the way, fell in with a pack train from Walla Walla to Helena. There I saw an old mess-mate whom I thought was looking for me, and I took to the sage brush. Can you give me a job? I am too light of weight to mine." I showed him a pile of pitch pine trees hauled up for my winter's fire wood, and said: "You will find the axe at the corner of the cabin." When he had spent a week on that wood pile it was chopped and piled up in ship-shape, with the chips gathered and thrown under a cover of poles he built, and all finished with as much care as a hunter would sit down and load a thousand cartridges.

"There's a world of trout down on Dear Lodge near Johnnie Grant's place, thirty miles from here,"

he said to me one day. There were eight inches of snow on the ground; the mercury stood at 10 degrees below zero. The following day was Sunday, when all the miners came in to trade. The sailor caught up my two pinto ponies and Monday before daylight we two, with a lunch in our pockets, an axe, fishing tackle and a piece of antelope meat for bait, started out. In four hours we were on Deer Lodge creek cutting holes through eight inches of clear, solid ice. Baiting our hooks with lines to a short pole of willow, we dropped them into eight feet of water, and at the first throw brought up two mountain brook trout that would weigh three-quarters of a pound each. As fast as we could bait our hooks and get them into the water a trout would take it. After landing four or five the water froze on the lines and covered them with nearly an inch of ice. After building a fire on the ice and eating a very cold lunch we fished another hour, and then started back home with nearly a half bushel of as handsome trout as it has ever been my good fortune to see. The fish froze stiff in half a minute after being out of water. The sailor said: "They froze with the 'wiggle' in." Lashing them behind the saddle in a grain bag we were back at Silver Bow soon after dark and threw the trout in a tub of water to thaw them out. In half an hour "Shorty" called out: "Bugger my eyes, mate, I'm a moose if the flounders ain't going." Sure enough, they had thawed out and were wiggling around in the shallow water in the tub trying to swim.

I have related this incident to many experienced fishermen and have sometimes noticed they ap-

peared to regard it as a "fish story" of pretty fair proportions, but although among them were several naturalists not one of them could give a satisfactory answer to the question: How can fish which have been frozen stiff come to life?

During my many fishing trips I have met fishermen of many countries and with all of them I have discussed the frozen fish incident, but no one could advance a palpable reason why our trout came to life after they had been dead to all appearances for several hours, and not only dead, but also frozen.

For my own part I would say that if fish were dead before the water around them thawed out they could never revive. Our trout surely froze with the "wiggle" on them, as my companion suggested.

\* \* \*

## **HE LOOKED LIKE THE BOSS OF A MULE TRAIN.**

Fort Laramie was headquarters for General Crook during his preparations for his Indian war against Sitting Bull and the northern Indians, in 1875-'76, and in anticipation of an Indian war that foreboded hardships and sufferings of the troops, wintering in the then unsettled Big Horn country, with the usual accidents of war added, a number of prominent newspapers throughout the country sent correspondents to Fort Laramie to accompany the army on the campaign. Of course no events had occurred up to that time and it was tedious work for the correspondents to stay around the post, where



no information could be obtained from the "close corporation" of General Phil Sheridan, who frequently visited the post to consult with General Crook and other officers who were busy enough figuring out the plans of their campaign to be carried into effect later. One afternoon the stage from Cheyenne drove up to my store and a gentlemanly appearing young man, with a tired look, and covered with the dust of travel, got out and inquired at the store where General Crook could be found.

He was directed to the officers' club rooms adjoining the store, and he started in that direction. The general and myself had just returned from up the Laramie valley, where we had spent the day hunting, and he had not yet gotten out of his well worn canvas hunting clothes and he looked like anything but a general planning the most important Indian war against the northern hostile Indians that the United States has ever known. He was knocking the billiard balls about waiting for his dinner. The new arrival, who proved to be a newspaper representative, walked around to the club room and looked in on a few young officers, but saw not one who had the appearance of a general, so he returned to the store for further information. The clerk asked:

"Did you see a large man with a full beard dressed in canvas hunting clothes and a slouch hat?"

"Yes," he replied, "I saw a seedy looking man dressed as you describe, but I am looking for General Crook."

"That's him," said the clerk.

"Well," said the stranger, "I took that man to be one of the bosses of a mule train."

"The clerk replied, "When you have talked with him a few minutes, you will find he has a more important job on hand than bossing a mule train."

Some months after this incident, and after General Mills' engagement with the Indians at Slim Butte, the general had been with his command enduring all the hardships of the noted Indian campaign on Tongue river and Rosebud, in which no private or officer suffered more privations or hardships than did the general himself, the command returned from the war, via Deadwood, then a somewhat new mining camp, that from its earliest discovery had been menaced and harassed by Indians, miners being driven in from prospecting, and many of them killed. The arrival of troops was to Deadwood and every settlement or prospector around it, the greatest boon they could possibly wish for. The keys of the town were by common consent turned over to the army. In the language of the Honorable Peter White of Michigan, the city "filled them to their jaw" with the best the town could offer. Officers and soldiers were treated alike. The gambling houses engaged an extra band, the "hurdy gurdy" houses opened with an added vim, and everything was free "to Crook and his soldiers." The troops were almost in rags from their long and arduous service in the field and not an officer or soldier among them but what was as well or better dressed than the general himself. Out of the merchants' limited stock of clothing which would become a brigadier general he was togged out in a

brand new suit, and in this he soon after arrived at Fort Laramie by stage to get in communication with Washington, D. C., this being the nearest telegraph station. On his arrival there I criticized the general's appearance a little, which did not in the least disconcert him. He said: "This is the very best the Deadwood merchant could supply and I was mighty glad to get it." Then the incident of that same correspondent who months before had taken the general for the "boss of a mule train," was brought out, for this same newspaper man had accompanied the general back to the post to send to his paper the latest news of the Indian war. As he finished his last article in my office and folded the papers to take to the telegraph office he said:

"When I go back east, I'll tell a few of these newspaper striplings that out west when you are looking for a man, to 'look him in the eye and not at the clothes he wears.'"

\* \* \*

### A COWBOY WEDDING.

If any romance can be attached to incidents of mountain life with one to five feet of snow on the ground, and the mercury 30 degrees below zero, the following is deserving of a place among romances.

Charles A. Pollard and myself owned a ranch on Labonte creek, in Wyoming, beginning at its mouth where it empties into the Platte river, and extending south up the valley nearly five miles. Mr. Pollard had two sons, one named Percy E. All his life had been spent on the Laramie river and on La-

bonte creek. Taking naturally to cattle and cowboy life, he became an expert horseman, and one of the very best cattle men. He knew every brand on the range for a hundred miles around, as well as he knew his own name, and was always in demand by cattle owners as one of the experts in handling both cattle and horses, and attended all the round-ups of the season—and yet a mere boy.

At the head of Horseshoe creek, up near Laramie peak, was a little saw mill, which supplied lumber to settlers building ranch houses in the vicinity. In the course of time the "P. C." ranch built a frame house at the crossing of the stream, and Percy, with one of the ranch hands, made frequent trips up to the mill in the mountains for lumber and logs. The mill owner, a Mr. Austin, with his family, lived there summer and winter among the pine trees. The weather was always severe in winter, but the winter's snow in many ways facilitated his getting out logs and hauling them to the mill to keep it running in summer.

The daughter of the owner of the mill, Miss Austin, was a comely mountain girl, endowed with industrious habits, good sense, and her share of good looks—honest and loyal to the core. It was not long until Percy's frequent trips to the mill became of so much interest to him that rain or shine he was always ready to "pull for the mountains." The trip could be made from the ranch in a day, with good roads and pleasant weather. Coming down with a load of logs or lumber, the wagon would not stand up under the load without the brake and "rough locking" the wheels. It took nearly

two days to come down with a load. Percy was counted a number one hand with a team, and a resourceful ingenuity enabled him to get out of all sorts of scrapes which log hauling occasionally got him into.

When snow came in the mountains, and an occasional thaw on the Labonte, the roads were icy, and even rough-locking the wagon wheels would not prevent the wagon slipping on side hills. At times the cowboy would stay in the mountain saw mill camp over night, awaiting more favorable roads and weather. As the days shortened, Percy thought that four days was about right for a trip, and he so planned that his lay-overs were at the house of the sawyer. Winter was now on in earnest and it was impossible to haul logs through deep snow. There was work to be done at the ranch—fences to fix, wood to chop, cattle to be fed. Six days was a long week. Every Sunday Percy had a new bronco to break, and this took him over the old road to the saw mill. Monday morning, however, always found him home at the ranch for breakfast. He was known by all the cowboys and men of the country and was well liked, always lending a hand to every one he found in trouble with cattle, horses, etc., and the boys were as ready to do him a turn.

One morning he got out of bed and found a level foot of snow on the ground, and the snow still falling, and not a shod horse on the place.

"Carrie, let me ride your bay mare to Douglas—I'll be back tonight. She don't ball up or stumble like the broncos," Percy called to his sister in the next room.

"Not going to town in this storm, are you?"

"Yep," Percy answered, and with Carrie's consent he was off to saddle the mare. Before closing the door, he called back, "If I bring that preacher back with me, can we keep him a couple of days?" And he did not wait for an answer. His sister watched him swing open and close the big gate without getting down, and heard the clatter of hoofs as he crossed over the bridge. Then she began wondering what the boy had on his mind.

Late at night he came stamping into the house, having fed and bedded the mare down. Then they all began firing questions at him until they came too close to the "main chance," and he unrolled his bed down on the floor near the big wood stove and "turned in." As a last answer he said, "I went after the preacher and some of the boys to help me pack him up to the saw mill." People in that vicinity remember that at that time all the roads were blocked with snow drifts, and the ravines filled in places fifty feet deep, but Percy had important business on hand and a few snow drifts would not stop him. The preacher didn't come with Percy, but would come to the ranch the following Thursday, if it stopped snowing and the trail was open to the ranch.

The next two or three days were busy times with the boy. He visited five or six ranches and got several cowboys to agree to go with him Wednesday and bring some lead horses to beat a trail through the drifts to the saw mill. Two or three pack horses carried the rolls of bedding, and some had no packs, and Sister Carrie's bay mare had an empty cowboy saddle and carried no load.

Wednesday they all started for the mountains Percy having left word at home to keep the preacher there until he came back—"and have a big supper and some cake." It was hard work walking back and forth through the snow-drifts, leading and riding the trail until it was made passable.

At the home of the Austins, the young woman and her mother had a table well filled with such things to eat as could be found in a house in the mountains, which has been snowed in for over two weeks. The meal consisted of bacon, bread and canned goods, prepared in the very best way. The cowboys unrolled their beds and bunked on the floor after supper. The next morning the horses were brought up, bundles of bedding packed on with a few extra bundles the horses had not carried up to the mill. Then Percy told the young lady, "That preacher is a tenderfoot, and we could not get him up here, but if he had come I would have lashed him on a horse, so we are going to pack you down to mother's and be married there, if the preacher don't go back on us." It was 30 degrees below zero on the mountains. A sharp wind kept the snow flying. Everybody was in the saddle. Ropes were fastened from the bits to horses' tails to keep them in line. The caravan started, Percy bringing up the rear, leading behind him the bay mare that carried the bride-to-be.

They all reached the ranch safely, but nearly frozen. The preacher had arrived, and the marriage ceremony was performed. Then came a square meal. The preacher and the boys bunked around on the floor for the night.

The next morning all pulled out for home, the preacher going on horseback to Douglas, ten dollars richer than when he came.

The next day Percy was around at his work as if nothing had happened. This young man and wife, with their little family of children, are now living up in North Dakota on a ranch. Every howling blizzard that comes up reminds Percy of the day he was married on the Labonte.

\* \* \*

#### HOW THE BUFFALO DISAPPEARED.

You would scarcely accuse the Secretary of the Interior or any high officer of the government of having any knowledge whatever of the sudden disappearance of the buffalo. As long as they roamed over the plains it was an impossibility for the government to bring the tribes of wild Indians onto a reservation, where they could go every thirty days and draw live beef, flour, sugar, calico, etc. While no officer of the government is positively known as taking part in ridding the country of buffalo or winking at the quick destruction, it is patent that these buffalo roamed on the reservations and no man whether Indian, squaw man, white man, or half breed, was ever opposed in going when and where he chose to kill them for their hides alone. When their hides were taken to the Yellowstone river and piled on the banks in piles larger than a stern-wheel steamboat, they sold for only \$1.00 per hide. Steamboats carried them to St. Louis where they were shipped to the tanneries and tanned



principally for collar leather—the very lowest grade of leather used. When tanned they brought only \$2.00 to \$3.00 each. A few were sent to Nova Scotia in hair and tanned in imitation of the Indian buffalo robe. But one lot sufficed. No one but an Indian could make a buffalo robe then.

How were the thousands of buffalo killed and their hides taken? A squaw man was usually the killer, or some miserable, lazy white man hanging around an agency. An excuse of a wagon, three or four Indian women, five or six of the very poorest riding ponies, and this miserable, lazy white man would drive to where a large herd was feeding. These herds could be found after the spring grass had started in half a day or a day's travel.

Generally the plain was flanked by a range of low bluffs, half a mile to a mile away from the herd. The squaw man with an eighteen-pound Sharp's rifle, sometimes with a telescope on, the cartridges loaded with 120 grains of powder and a fifty-calibre bullet, fixed ammunition, would kill at a mile. The hunter would secrete the squaws and wagon. With a bucket full of ammunition he would crawl to a commanding position on the bluff, hide himself behind soapweed, sagebrush, or greasewood, with the wind always blowing towards him, and deliberately fire away into the herd until his ammunition was exhausted, and being far away the buffalo would hear no report. Then the squaws would come up with ponies and wagon, kill all the cripples that could not get away, and after the slaughter of one or two hundred animals in a day, three or four days would be required to "skin the kill."

This is how the buffalo disappeared so suddenly. Only a year or two before they roamed over the plains in countless thousands.

Today there is scarcely an Indian alive, man, woman, or child, that does not go to an agency on issue day and draw all the rations they need and clothing for all and the buffalo is scarcely missed, even by the Indians.

\* \* \*

### **CALIFORNIA JOE—WHO BROUGHT IN THE MULE?**

While the United States troops stationed along the Platte river near Fort Laramie were trying to prevent miners from going into the Black Hills before the treaty was concluded, a motley crowd of pretended miners assembled around Fort Laramie and along the Platte river, intending to steal across the river and by circuitous routes get into the Hills, and hide in the forest until a sufficient number of people were there to remain. At this time there were hundreds who escaped the vigilance of the military.

Among the number a somewhat famous and eccentric fellow called "California Joe" hovered around the post for several days, and succeeded in picking up an ambulance driver by the name of Gray as a partner—miners always go in pairs.

At the trader's store one Saturday night they purchased a month's supplies, including gold pans, picks, shovels, gold scales and quicksilver, and loaded them on a pack mule in the enclosure at

the rear of the store. Just about as they were leaving the officer of the day came up and inquired where they were going. "Over on the Platte to trap beaver and wait until we can go into the hills," was Joe's reply. This being a reasonable answer they were permitted to pass the guard and they pulled out across the sand hills and went in camp on the Platte about two miles from the fort.

Included in their supplies was a two gallon keg of whiskey. California Joe was always supplied with money from some source, but he did not show the disposition to "blow it in" that the average western man does when reaching a point where he could spend it. For his personal use he purchased two pair of trousers and a pair of California riveted overalls, and put them all on, also three woolen shirts and put them on over his undershirts. When one became soiled he would pull it off and throw it away. Then his overshirt appeared clean. As it was after dark when they reached the Platte they turned the mule out to graze (the mule carried their supplies, they expecting to walk); they made a hasty meal over the camp-fire, unrolled their beds, and tumbled in without any ceremony. The next morning the mule was brought in and fed grain, then picketed out to grass; the supplies put under cover; the tent put up, and to pass away the time a deck of cards was brought out. Later in the day the keg of whiskey was tapped. The game of cards went on until towards evening, when it was time to stir up the fire, make coffee, boil potatoes and fry the bacon. The question of bringing in the mule came up. Neither of them, in their stupid condition, felt like

doing this, although the mule was only a few hundred yards away. Joe, the more inebriated of the two, insisted on his partner, Gray, performing this duty, which Gray refused to do, he having just prepared supper. The argument became quite warm and ended in a war of words. Joe finally proposed to Gray: "I'll tell you how to fix this thing; we'll both take the extractor out of our rifles, put in one cartridge, step off fifty paces and each fire one shot; the one then able to go after the mule will bring him in, or leave him out all night." Gray agreed to this, for in this way he could find out the disposition of his new partner, which he must do sooner or later. The rifles were loaded, they stood back to back and counted off twenty-five paces in opposite directions. At a given signal both wheeled and fired a shot. Gray was hit in the arm and fell. Joe thinking he was nearly dead and having failed to take the extractor from his gun, put in another cartridge, took a second shot at Gray, and missed. Dropping his rifle he then went to Gray's assistance.

At this time a boy from up the Platte river rode by on horseback, going to the fort. Joe called to him, but the boy at once took in the situation and did not feel like going to them. Joe called a second time; the boy not coming up, he picked up his rifle, and firing a shot ahead of the boy, he said, "I guess you'll come now." The boy immediately rode to the camp and asked what was wanted. "Go over to the fort and tell the post trader that California Joe has shot his partner and to send a wagon over for him." The boy, anxious to get away, rode to the fort in hot haste.

About dark the lad came to my house with the message. I had no suitable wagon for this purpose, and as it was no affair of the military, I sent the boy up the Laramie river three miles to Cuny and Coffee's ranch, and they immediately sent a wagon after Gray, and took Joe along with them, as Cuny had some authority as a deputy sheriff. Joe mounted the mule and on the road over left the crowd to make a short cut, and in that way escaped.

Gray's wound was not serious, but he was later brought down to the post hospital for treatment and soon recovered so he could resume his former occupation as ambulance driver, and accompanied Major John Furay's wagon train up in the hills, where later these two men met again and immediately thought they would settle old scores. This time Gray wounded Joe, and when the cause of the shooting was known, the Major turned Joe out of camp. The next heard of Joe, he was over at Red Cloud agency, where he was killed in an affray with one Newcombe. The cause of this fracas was that Joe had been blamed for killing old man Reshaw, and Newcombe, the only man supposed to know about the affair, might later expose him, so he undertook to kill Newcombe, who was the quicker of the two, and Joe fell dead on the spot.

California Joe was a hunter, miner and scout of some note in the mountain country, but in every way unreliable when managing an affair for himself. Colonel W. F. Cody, "Buffalo Bill," knew him on the plains for years and frequently got officers of some command to employ Joe, for in that direction he was quite useful and was usually paid

by the day for his services. He was thoroughly loyal to Cody, and was often of great assistance in dividing the long tedious scouts in the saddle. Cody has some good stories to tell of his good-natured lying propensities, and when Cody made his visit to Omaha, in 1905, to say farewell before sailing to Paris, France, to make his last season in the Wild West show, he told me some amusing things about California Joe.

In early days while scouting and guiding army troops north to the then unknown wilderness of the Big Horn country, he saw a typical mountaineer coming towards the command, and went out to meet him. When within the sound of each other's voices their salute was—"Hello Joe;" "Hello Bill." Joe was down on his luck and a picture of poverty, clothed in the remnants of buckskin shirt, breeches and moccasins, with a well worn slouch hat through which his hair protruded.

"Out o' luck?" asked Cody.

"No! just striking it," said Joe.

"Come into the command and I will ask the commanding officer to pay you \$4.00 a day for your knowledge of the country we are going through."

Like all men who have passed the meridian of life prospecting the mountains for gold—when game was scarce and provisions short, who find an Indian camp and kill buffalo and deer and elk for the simple reward of being allowed to live among the Indians under the shelter of a lodge made of dressed elk skin—Joe had become "dreamy," talked to himself, and in his own mind thought out ways of lead-

ing the invaders of his domain into illusions of wonderful discoveries he had made.

When the command halted at night, Joe rode in with a deer behind his saddle, and as he unlashed the carcass and let it fall to the ground, unsaddled his pony and turned him loose, he called "Bill" to one side and said:

"We are just over the crossing not half an hour's ride off the trail. Bring the Captain and we three will ride over when camp's broke."

"What have you struck?" asked Cody. A grunt was the only response and no more information could be gotten from him.

Early next morning Joe in the lead and the Captain and Cody following side by side, they turned off their course and soon came to a mound covered with boulders. Joe dismounted, took off his well worn slouch hat and stood silent a few minutes. In the earnest reverence the Captain broke the silence by saying:

"Well Joe! Whose grave is this and what do you know about it?"

"It's a long story,—I just came down from Lost Cabin up on the range, 'good pardner,' and he never kicked."

"Now let him alone, Captain; he will break out when he is ready, and all h—I couldn't get another word out of him until he is ready to talk," said Cody.

So they mounted their horses and rode away to overtake the troops then on the march. The Captain's curiosity was aroused and he rode alongside of Joe, whom the warm sun soon thawed to a talking mood.

**A MAN WITH NERVE.**

The first scramble for government land occurred in southeastern Wyoming along the old "'49" wagon trail to California and the North Platte river west of Fort Laramie. The emigrant teams were numerous on the river road, with "half the people going west and the others coming back." As in the days of the "'49" gold seekers, many seemed to have no particular aim in life other than going and coming and following the crowd. As ranches had many years before been located in all the valleys along the streams, according to the custom of the cattlemen in those days all the lands adjacent to water had been fenced. Some of these restless people were landseekers and had been told that very few entries of land had been made according to law, and to secure good claims all they had to do was to tear down the fences, camp in the fields, and wait for the owners to buy or order them off. My partner, Mr. Pollard, and myself had taken up under the desert act 1,800 acres on Labonte creek. The old California trail had passed through out choicest grass land. We had several miles of irrigating ditches and all our patented lands were under fence and the place was widely known as "P. C. Road ranch." The many arguments and discussions Mr. Pollard had to contend with and settle were exceedingly annoying, principally growing out of these restless people cutting fences and camping in the fields. What little hay there was in the country was valued at about \$100.00 per ton, and these intruders were doing damage to the grass land.



Pollard was a quiet man with a cast-iron nerve, a seeming idle brain, but he never lost a moment's time in looking after the company's property. It was a dull and uninteresting sunrise that did not find him up before the break of day inspecting fences, counting his cattle, frequently finding one or two short,—killed by these roamers. Riding up to the tents of the intruders, he would ask, "Why don't you camp outside the fence or go on to Wagonhound creek, or to the Laporal where there is plenty unfenced land? You are on patented land and you better move off." Pollard never carried a "gun," or made a "bluff." There was something in his quiet manner and his big grey eyes that was rather convincing, but quarreling was not his tactics.

In the spring time the Labonte was banks full. This being the time of travel, it was no small task to ford the streams and particularly Labonte creek. A pair of black stallions had been pressed into his service for fording. The water was from four to six feet deep and running like a torrent. When he got a good-sized audience, riding one stallion and leading the other, right under the eyes of the disturbers, Pollard would ride into the stream, slide back over the horse's rump, hold on to his tail and be towed through the water to the other shore.

Now the pilgrims saw what they had to encounter. Crossing back Pollard would quietly ride to his ranch and leave the pilgrims to find out what was to follow. Then half a dozen would follow him to the house and begin negotiations for helping them over the crossing. Here is where Pollard got

in his work. A camper would call out, "Cap, we'll move out today if you help us across the stream." "I'll cross your wagons for \$5.00 apiece. The loose stock can swim," Pollard would reply. Then came an interval of silence. The men moved off to camp with a worried look to hold a counsel as to what could be done. Some were in favor of camping in the field until the stream would go down. This might take days or weeks and would their provisions hold out? At the Labonte store flour was \$15.00 a bag, canned goods \$1.00 a can. If this lasted long they would all be afoot, so that in the end Pollard had not been bluffed. But they paid him \$5.00 each and went away of their own accord, instead of his having to pay them.

The only weapon he used was sand.

### THE KILLING OF HUNTON.

James Hunton was killed by Indians in the summer of 1876 on Chugwater creek. Returning from the east I left Cheyenne with my span of bronco horses to drive to Fort Laramie. The road was counted safe as far north as Kelly's ranch on Chugwater; beyond Kelly's it was risky to drive to Fort Laramie. Colonel Townsend, the officer commanding the fort, left Cheyenne the same morning by ambulance and as far as Kelly's we kept in sight of each other and all arrived at the ranch about sundown. Kelly's was about half way between Cheyenne and Fort Laramie—a drive of forty-six to forty-eight miles. The next morning I made an early start and soon after daylight came to the ranch

kept by the Hunton brothers. Here the Chugwater following the main valley turns west and flows into the Laramie river, where F. M. Phillips established a cattle ranch, about nine miles west. The road to the post ran due north. During the night there was a shower of rain and the roads were a little muddy. As I drove by Hunton's home along the roadside, following the custom of the country, when no one is in sight, I shouted a greeting. The door opened at once and one of the brothers hailed me, and came out to my buggy. He said, "Indians came to our corral, let down the bars and drove off our horse herd, about an hour ago. We were just getting up and heard them go by, but thought it was some ranchmen with a herd of cow horses. A little later we looked out and saw the pasture bars were down, you can see the tracks of the whole outfit in the mud right here. Jim's saddle horse was in the barn and he saddled up and took his pistol and started on the trail leading towards Goshen Hole. His horse just came back with the saddle and bridle and I'm afraid the Indians have got Jim. When you get to Fort Laramie tell the officer in command, and ask him to send a sergeant and some soldiers towards Charley Coffee's ranch and perhaps he can overtake them before they reach the Platte river."

I told Hunton the commanding officer was just behind us, and I would wait until his ambulance drove up. In a short time Colonel Townsend drove up and heard the news. Turning to me he said: "Collins, you can reach the post quicker than we can. Give the officer in command my compliments, and tell him to send a sergeant and twenty men

down near Coffee's ranch, in the Hole, immediately and look out for a party of thirteen Indians, and it possible pick up the trail before the Indians reach the Platte river." It was thirty-one miles to the post from Hunton's. My broncos were fresh, and in good condition, and with James Smith, a colored man who accompanied me, (this same Smith at this writing is in charge of one of General Manager George W. Holdrege's private cars in Omaha) I started.

"Jog 'em kind of slow till we pass Johnny Owen's ranch, then cut 'em loose and we'll make it in two hours sure," said Jim. When I pulled up on the lines the horses champed the bits, shook their heads and started on about a six-mile-an-hour gait. Soon their speed increased and they whirled along over the road, faster and faster as they limbered up. "I believe them horses know there's something the matter," said Jim, and from their actions, you would suppose Jim was right. We passed Owen's ranch with the usual salute and got no answer. Soon after we were over one of the sand spots and on a gravel road, as smooth as a turnpike. Jim was in his element and believed no other team in the country could match this pair over a smooth road, and that was the opinion all the ranchmen along the road held. We were now in a somewhat dangerous Indian country ourselves. The roads continued smooth, and improved as they dried on the surface. "Here's where we make time; we are going like a railroad train," said Jim. We passed the six-mile ranch. The horses were in a foam of sweat, but the further they traveled the easier they seemed to

move—they were headed towards home. We plowed through a small patch of sand when in sight of the fort, passed the "papoose tree," and as we turned in to cross the bridge at the post, I looked at my watch; we had made the drive of thirty-one miles in two hours flat.

As we crossed the bridge and drove by the quartermaster's warehouses we met the officer of the day and told him the news.

The papoose tree referred to was a big box elder that stood three hundred yards from and opposite the quarters called "Dobie Row," its branches covering a space of at least seventy-five feet in diameter. It contained no less than forty bodies of Indian children wrapped in skins and robes, and lashed to the limbs of the tree with buffalo thongs, at that time the mode of Indian burial.\*

After delivering Colonel Townsend's message to the officer of the day, I drove to the headquarters and repeated it to the officer in command.

In half an hour Lieutenant Allison and twenty men were galloping across the Laramie river and up Cherry creek over the Goshen Hole mesa towards the ranch of Charles Coffee, situated about twelve miles from the Platte river. Meanwhile Jim had rubbed the horses down, given them a little water, and walked them around to cool off before feeding. This thirty-one mile drive in two hours was considered the best drive known in the country, over that end of the road.

---

\*As the thongs rotted away the bundle would fall to the ground and the coyotes would instantly come from far and near and tear them open. Bones, heads and various trinkets were scattered on the ground under the tree.

Soon after we left Hunton's ranch, Little Bat, Charles Coffee, John Sparks, and two or three other ranchmen, came to Hunton's, and hearing of their fellow ranchmen being in peril, they immediately took up the trail. After following it nine or ten miles, they came onto the body of Hunton, dead and scalped. About this time Lieutenant Allison came up with his men and they soon returned to the fort. Little Bat and others carried the body on their horse's back to Hunton's ranch and John Sparks, now governor of Nevada, and Charles Coffee, at this time an extensive cattle owner, and president of the First National bank, Chadron, Nebraska, continued on the trail several miles beyond where the body was found, to Coffee's ranch. No better account of what followed can be given than the letter, here printed, from Charles Coffee. This letter was in answer to my request of an account of the result of the journey of Mr. Sparks and himself, alone, following thirteen Indians, after I had left the Chugwater.

The troops sent from Fort Laramie arrived at the point where the body was found about the time the party from the ranch arrived, and knowing the character of the country and that the "dead line" or reservation line was the Platte river, upon which they had no right to encroach, and believing the Indians would cross the Platte river before they could overtake them, returned to Fort Laramie and reported the result of their scout to Colonel Townsend, who by this time had reached the post and at once assumed command.

LETTER OF MR. COFFEE

Chadron, Nebraska, Sept. 3, 1904.

Mr. J. S. Collins,  
Omaha, Neb.

My dear old friend:—

Your letter is just at hand and I have also received your book which I know will be interesting. You asked some questions about the killing of Jim Hunton on the road from Cheyenne to Fort Laramie. I think it was in 1876 near my ranch on Box Elder creek. I had been out hunting the day before and discovered Indian signs, so when I went back to the ranch, I had all my horses put in corral and put up a tent to fool the Indians. The next day "Little Bat" came to my ranch and said that Hunton's horse was close to the ranch, and he thought the Indians had killed Hunton. I had come from the Laramie road the evening before. John Sparks, now the governor of Nevada, was with me at my ranch and we two picked out a couple of my best saddle horses and went out on the trail and found Jim's body within a half mile, and we then took up the trail of the Indians, thinking we could catch them before they crossed the Platte river, as the trail grew fresher and fresher the further we went. When we reached the hills I stopped and said to Sparks, "What will we do if we catch the Indians? There are thirteen of them and only two of us." We stopped and held a council and concluded we had lost no Indians and went back to the ranch. If we had caught up with them, Sparks would not now be governor of Nevada, neither would I be running a

bank in Chadron. This I think is what you refer to and in order to get the information correct I looked over some of my old books. If a fellow could think of all that happened in those days he could make some good reading for these quiet days, but no one except the old-timers like you and I would believe such things to be true. C. F. COFFEE.

\* \* \*

### MOSQUITOS.

The steamer "Cora" rounded up to the west bank of the Missouri river near the mouth of the Judith to take on wood. All the passengers were at supper. While the boat was in motion no great inconvenience was experienced from mosquitoes. When the boat landed the insects came on board by the million. Women left the table, rushed to their state rooms and put on sunbonnets, veils and gauntlet gloves and rushed frantically to get away. There was no escaping the mosquitoes, they swarmed on board and found their way into every inch of space on the boat. The men passengers went on shore to the great smudge fires burning around the camp. The "mud" clerk hurried ashore with his eight-foot measuring stick, laid it along the wood pile and shouted back to the mate:

"Eight cords in this pile, do we want any more?"

The deck hands hurried ashore and in less than half an hour had the eight cords on board. The owner of the wood yard meanwhile sauntered into a corral with two yoke of cattle, a Springfield rifle on his shoulder. As he stepped on the gang plank to collect his pay for the wood I was saluted with:



"Hello, Mr. Collins; what in h—l are you doing up in this God-forsaken country?"

The man was about seventy years old; his hair hung down over his neck and a greasy and well worn over shirt, whiskers a foot long and a mustache covered his face. His eyes and mouth, almost concealed with hair, he was a degenerated looking Santa Claus. The corral he put his cattle in was built of logs two feet in diameter and forty feet long. The bars were secured with heavy log chains. Inside this was the cabin where the old man lived alone and between the continual and unceasing attacks by mosquitos and the hourly danger that Indians would come in and raid his cabin he was worrying through a miserable existence. seemingly not caring whether he lived through it or not. He had "gone broke" up in the mines, worked his way down on the deck of a steamboat and, with a partner, stopped at this big cottonwood grove where he was daily in sight of and in fear of hostiles. His story was:

"Collins, the d—d Injuns won't kill me as long as they know I can get grub from a steamboat and divide with them."

Of course I was curious to know who this grizzled old man was that called me by name in one of the most uninviting spots I had ever seen.

He had once driven a dray in Galena for our business house; hauling goods from our store, ten years ago, as he explained it. He shipped at Omaha with Captain Tom Townsend for Fort Benton and the gold mines. He said to me: "When the grub gives out I will try and be out of the country and save my

scalp. God only knows why I should try to save it, and perhaps starve later on ; for a man over seventy with not a dollar, can't expect much in civilization."

\* \* \*

### SCALPED BY THE SIOUX.

In the summer of 1866 I stood in my store on Douglas street, Omaha, and saw one of our then well known physicians, long since dead, drive by in a buggy. A man beside him was wrapped from head to foot in a white sheet. They stopped in front of the Hamilton house on Douglas street, a small brick hotel, standing where now is the Calumet restaurant. Following a small crowd I saw the man in the sheet taken out and assisted into the hotel. He carried a bucket of water and in it floated the scalp of the man who carried the bucket. Only forty-eight hours before, this man, Conductor Crawford, was running a freight train on the Union Pacific road near Plumb Creek, Nebraska. The Indians, in the frenzy of committing all the devilment they could, had piled railroad ties on the track at a high embankment and the first freight train that came along, with Crawford in charge, was thrown down the embankment. The engineer and fireman escaped in the brush, but Crawford was caught, and left for dead. Hearing the whistle of another engine approaching, and in their haste to get away, the scalp was dropped by the Indians. A little later Crawford regained consciousness and on his way out of the brush came onto his own scalp. He picked it up and hid in the brush until night came, then found

his way up to the track where he saw the engine that came to inquire the cause of the delay of the freight. He was immediately taken to the nearest station and there remained until an eastbound train came along and brought him to Omaha, carrying with him his own scalp, thinking it might be sewed back onto his head. At the Omaha depot he was met by a doctor and, as above stated, taken up town where he remained several days. Being a strong, healthy man, his lacerated head soon began to heal, but the scalp, of course, could not be replaced.

At this writing, 1910, this scalp hangs in a glass case in the Omaha city library on public exhibition. Crawford, the owner of the scalp, was recently known to be a conductor of a passenger train in the vicinity of Salt Lake City, Utah, in good health, following his old business, but always wearing a skull cap.

This is one of the incidents of the building of the Union Pacific railroad. The scalp is now owned by a physician who is practicing in Omaha today.

\* \* \*

### **THE RATTLESNAKE.**

On Broom creek south of Rawhide buttes I was following the trail of a blacktail deer one morning before breakfast. I saw from my saddle a rattlesnake lying along the trail. Midway its length was a lump as large as a baseball. I shot the snake in two and with a forked stick pushed out a fully grown meadow lark. Its feathers were almost dry and the snake had swallowed the bird not more than half an hour before my coming.

**HOW ANTELOPE KILL SNAKES.**

Wherever antelope range there are rattlesnakes. I have often seen a dozen or so antelope out on the open range cavorting around. They do not take to the brush or timber like members of the deer family remaining entirely in the open relying upon their fleetness and cunning to keep them out of harm's way. They bound over gullies twenty feet in width, but a wire fence eighteen or twenty inches high used to stop them as they do not jump up into the air like other quadrupeds.

One day north of Fort Laramie several miles I saw a band of sixteen antelope a mile off on the plains. They appeared to be bounding upward and altogether acting queerly. Riding over to where their antics had been carried on I found five dead rattlesnakes, all cut to pieces. The antelope had killed the snakes by bounding upward like a bucking horse, bringing their sharp hoofs together and so landing on the snakes, which was probably play to the antelope but death to the snakes.

\* \* \*

**JIM BRIDGER.**

No book bearing on the early history of the west within the last fifty years is complete without mention of the name of "Jim" Bridger. No man in the west was better able to judge this rough old mountaineer than General G. M. Dodge who, during the war of the rebellion, won his spurs and became a major general in the United States army. It was

Jim Bridger who showed General Dodge the easy way the Union Pacific could cross the continental divide. General Dodge was then the "pathfinder" and the chief engineer of the road until reaching the mountains. All the old-timers the general consulted about this difficult task said: "Send for old Jim Bridger. He can show you the only way." And that is the way General Dodge came to know Bridger so well and he relied upon his judgment implicitly.

General Dodge at the old home of Bridger erected a monument to his memory paying for it out of his private funds.

Back in 1864 I met and talked with Bridger at old Fort Laramie, Wyoming.

\* \* \*

### **HOLDING UP A U. S. MARSHAL.**

During the early travel between Cheyenne and the Black Hills, M. T. and A. S. Patrick ran a star route stage line via Fort Laramie to Rawhide buttes, Lance and Indian creeks and Red canyon. No sooner had the Indians deserted that road, where they had for a season held high carnival, killing men and women, stealing horses and mules and making it the most dangerous route of travel in the west than the road agents organized and a reign of terror followed that taxed the vigilance of the owners of the stage line, the military and all the people traveling by that road, beyond their ability to cope with. Although detectives and messengers were constantly on the road and succeeded in capturing,

killing and hanging a number of the robbers the depredations did not cease for many months. A United States marshal located at Cheyenne felt it his duty to take notice of the frequent robbing of the mails. Armed with a new Colt's revolver, an abundance of ammunition and a few threats that he would put a stop to these high-handed outrages, he took passage on the stage from Cheyenne, arriving at Fort Laramie the next day. Being so near the scene of action he considered he could transact his business at the post and there he remained two or three days to thoroughly post himself on the situation asking no advice and heeding no suggestions from either the officers of the post, managers of the stage line who suffered more from the robbing of passengers and the treasury carried by them than did dozens of freight and emigrant wagons, and many men of the country. After remaining two or three days at Fort Laramie he took the down stage back to Cheyenne having accomplished nothing. Three miles out was a small swing station with one of the stage company men in charge of a stable built of log slabs and any lumber that could be had, a corral and a hay yard. Just before the stage reached this station the driver called out his usual salute to the stock tender. There was no answer and as it was before daylight he concluded the stock tender was asleep. Just before reaching there one of a gang of robbers stopped the coach and ordered the driver to "hold that team of Jack Rabbits," (six small gray mules) or there would be trouble for him. A second robber held a revolver on the marshal and the passengers in the coach and after taking the mar-

shal's revolver and overcoat away from him, told him to shell out his watch and loose change "d—d quick," which the marshal proceeded to do without remonstrance. All of this was completed in a brief space of time and the driver was ordered to "move on and not look back."

It was quite apparent that a United States marshal could accomplish no more in the Indian country where road agents held full sway, than could any other ordinary citizen so unfortunate as to be thrown in their way, and this bit of adventure furnished much amusement to those called "the men of the country." A gentleman now living in Omaha may recall this incident and no doubt is convinced that robbers do not respect the star of the United States marshal any more than they do a stray brand of whisky that may be found on the road.

About this time there were other hold-ups, but the sufferers were not boasting that they would undertake to regulate the robbers and put an end to all troubles, as did the more sanguine marshal, who thought he might quickly end the trouble.

At Fort Laramie I built for the accomodation of travelers to the Black Hills, who could not obtain meals and lodgings elsewhere at the post, the Rustic hotel. There was a very good cook there by the name of Morrison, whose chief fault was liquor. At the end of two months he concluded to go to Denver and visit his children. The stage for Cheyenne came along about dusk. Morrison carried his earnings in his bootleg. Among other passengers in the coach were two women. When the stage arrived at Eagles' Nest, (a ranch kept by Johnny Owens) and

pulled in to change horses at this swing station, the passengers were met by two robbers who poked revolvers under their noses and ordered them to plank down their valuables. In addition to this they requested the women to take down their hair in which they found a few diamonds that had been concealed there. When the stage had changed horses, Morrison lay over to take the coach going back, he having no money with which to proceed to Denver, and at daylight he knocked at the door of the Rustic and told his tale of woe.

When the commanding officer heard of the coach adventures as usual he ordered out twenty men to search for the robbers. They found a trail of two unshod horses that had doubled back north to the Platte river. They crossed the Platte and in the vicinity of the "4 P" ranch kept by one Breckenridge, they met a party coming west, two Chinamen traveling with them. The robbers had held up this party and gone north.





## HUNTING STORIES

### WILD GOOSE HUNTING ON THE PLATTE RIVER.

When General Crook had finished his Indian campaign of '76 and returned to Omaha to announce to the people that the Big Horn country was then open to safe settlement, and told of the nutritious grasses, fine mountain streams and its special adaptability to the open range for cattle, he was to enjoy his well earned rest and to continue in command of the Department of the Platte, with headquarters at Omaha.

There were voluminous copies and reports to be made to the War Department of his Indian campaign. Notwithstanding which, while he could not go very far away from his headquarters for any length of time, he could not overcome his fondness for hunting prairie chicken, quail, snipe, curlew, wild geese and ducks, squirrels, coyote and wildcats, all of which were to be found in abundance near Omaha in their season.

Among his many journeys to the Platte river (the half way station for wild geese, where the geese came and waited in great numbers in spring and fall, between their southern winter quarters and their breeding grounds in the alkali lakes of the northern country,) one of our hunts for wild geese was in the winter of 1881. A late fall and warm Indian summer weather had kept the Platte river open until December, then came a cold snap that froze it over as tight as a drum head, excepting a few air holes and

narrow, swift channels that always remained open the entire winter. The ice buckled up and cracked in many places and through these cracks the water oozed up and spread over the ice, often covering a space of half an acre one to four inches deep. On this trip, General Crook, John Petty and myself were the party, and we took the Union Pacific train for Central City, Nebraska. There a team awaited us which carried us down near the river to the old log cabin of one Tague, who had come out from Iowa wild goose hunting twenty-five years before to settle and make a new home in Nebraska. The ages of himself and wife were near to three score years each, when they settled on this homestead claim. They had one son who, at the date of our visit, was about thirty years old. When the family settled on this farm in the Platte valley, the Indians outnumbered the white settlers about ten to one, and as the old couple recited to us the great tax of trying to feed all the Indians who visited them to beg from their meager store—and they gave all they could to keep on friendly terms—their voices trembled and their eyes watered as they told us of their sufferings. The cabin was built of logs, hewed on two sides with an axe, the inside and outside alike, no finish, only chinked and daubed, mud being used instead of lime or plaster. There were three home-made bed frames covered with well stuffed feather beds, of feathers of wild geese and ducks taken along the river. These were partitioned off by calico curtains. A big cook stove answered for heating the whole house,—as there was but one room,—as well as for cooking. The fuel was chiefly corn on the ear and corn cobs.

Out of their attempt to surround the cabin with a timber grove, only a few cottonwood trees were scattered about the unfenced house lot,—all that were left from the numerous prairie fires.

The son, who at meal time always answered promptly to the name of "Jack", had come home ostensibly to visit, but as a fact to winter on the old people. He told us the occupation he had followed several years was that of a "buffalo skinner." A white man could fall no farther down the ladder than this and Jack gave evidence of having reached the bottom rung. He was lazy and talkative, to any one who would listen to his uninteresting confab.

The nearest neighbors of the Tagues were three to four miles away. At the time of our visit, things had considerably improved with them over their condition in former years.

The next morning after our arrival, we carried on our backs, bags of sheet iron duck and goose decoys, (for immense flocks of mallard ducks remained by the river all winter, and fed with the geese in the cornfields of the bluffs on either side, roosting on the sand bars)—overcoats, hundreds of loaded cartridges, besides our guns. We reached the river bank a mile away and by picking our way, wading open channels and avoiding the air holes, we came to a sand bar where droves of geese had made their roosting place the night before near some tow heads about a mile from shore.

The weather was moderately cool and hazy, and had every appearance of being a good goose day. We at once began building blinds of drift wood found along the bars, and willow switches, carried

from the island. To find a suitable place for goose blinds it is necessary to be on the sand bars at daylight, in sight of where geese can be seen on the bars. Just as the sun begins to show above the horizon, a signal "honk" is heard and taken up by the geese all along the river. At once their flight to the feeding ground begins, and in half an hour not a single goose remains on the river. Now is the time to locate and build blinds and begin placing decoys. An hour or two later the geese begin to fly back from the fields to where they had roosted, and if the blinds are properly located and completed, the decoys placed, and everything made snug out of sight, now is the time the sport begins in earnest. Our blinds were just completed, all the decoys properly placed and everything appeared favorable for a fine day's sport. We were just fully prepared when away off in the east a rumbling rolling sound like distant thunder was heard. The General was snug in one blind and Petty and I in another not one hundred yards away.

"General, I don't like that noise," said Petty. "I think a blizzard is coming, and we better gather our traps and get off the ice right away." The subject of a blizzard was discussed for a moment, when the swishing of trees was heard in the east, and the rolling, rumbling sound came nearer and louder. We at once began packing up decoys, ammunition, etc., to leave for the shore, and this we did in the quickest time possible. The air was full of sand blown from the bars. The wind suddenly grew colder and by the time everything was gathered and loaded on our backs a most terrific blizzard and snow storm struck

us and the air was so dense we could not see beyond our noses. We had the direction and started for the north shore; it was agreed we all three should stay together, for if one became separated, there was great danger of his being lost in the storm. The wind shifted to the north after we had made a start and it was almost impossible to make headway against it on the ice. The General's hunting hat blew off and as he turned round to catch it the wind caught his big canvas overcoat and in an instant he was skated away from us and out of sight.

We carried our heads down, braced our shoulders up against the wind, and thinking the General was just behind us, we kept on. Presently Petty asked if the General was coming, and said, "I am going to holler for him," and he let go two or three yells louder than a Comanche Indian. There was no answer. He yelled again but no answer came. If we stopped and turned around the wind would skate us over the ice and out of sight in an instant. There was nothing to do but brace ourselves against it and go on for the north shore, then unload and go back and find the General. Just at the edge of the shore there was an open channel of water, in we plunged and waded through to the bank. In an instant our clothing was frozen stiff, but paying no heed to this we stripped ourselves of our load and overcoats and started on a run to hunt the General. Before reaching him the wind lulled, the snow ceased, and when the air cleared we could see a small black speck coming from behind an island towards the opposite shore, a mile away from us. We made all haste over the smooth ice, through the slush ice

on top, and open seams, toward it. I was the first to reach the object, which proved to be the General. He was so benumbed and so dazed he did not know us. I took his load and his gun and tried to get his great canvas coat off to enable him to walk more easily, but it could not be unbuttoned. When he had turned to catch his hat and left us, the wind had carried it into open water nearly six inches deep and as the wind caught and carried him over the smooth ice into the water he picked his hat up half full of water and put it on his head. The water ran down and froze on his whiskers and coat collar and the front of his coat to his knees in an instant. Petty soon met us. The General could not speak. In half an hour had he been alone he would have fallen on the ice from sheer exhaustion and frozen to death. We managed to reach the north shore, when we discovered that his nose, face and ears were white and frozen.

Petty on one side and I on the other, with slush ice and snow we rubbed the frost out, and as the color came back to his face he began to realize his situation and also recognized both of us. "General," said Petty, "our goose shoot is busted for today,—let's go up to the log cabin." "All right," said the General, and with one of us on each side to assist him, both loaded to the guards with all of our hunting paraphernalia strapped about us, we started on a long and tedious walk through the tangled grass that in almost every rod of travel one of us would fall headlong. "This sporting life is h—ll," said Petty. It was near an hour before we reached the

log cabin, and the results of following incident guided me in what to do.

At one time when I sold goods in Silver Bow, Montana, a man was brought to my store in the middle of a clear moonlight night on a horse led by another man. It was in the dead of winter with the mercury thirty degrees below zero. When I went to the door the man who led the horse said, "This man followed the stampede to Kootney river mines and turned back with me. We have waded streams and rivers, too swift to freeze, and we almost perished. He is badly frozen but told me, when we turned back, to lead him to John Collins' store at Silver Bow." We took him into my store, built of logs, that was only chinked and not daubed, and took off his wraps. His legs were frozen solid to his knees, his arms frozen to his elbows, and face and ears frozen; he was dazed and almost unconscious. We cut his boots open to get them off, ripped up his coat sleeves, put his feet in a tub of cold water, rubbed his hands, arms and face with snow until the frost was out; then I applied coal oil out of a lamp (at that time coal oil was scarce and selling at \$5.00 per gallon), cut open a bed comfort, picked the cotton out and spent the balance of the night in caring for him. We were successful in restoring him to life. When the morning came I was curious to know who in that far away country had admonished his friend that if he lived to reach Silver Bow he must be turned over to me, as the one and only man he thought would take care of him, and this is the brief story he told:

"Don't you remember when I used to drive Captain Smith Harris' carriage in Galena? He was the captain of the big side wheel steamer 'Northern Belle.' "

I did remember, and was taught a lesson then and there, that on the occasion referred to I had saved a man's life with coal oil and cotton, so when we had the General back to the Tagues' cabin, I immediately asked for "coal oil and cotton" and we bound his entire face and head in coal oil and cotton.

It was the third day after that that the General made his first appearance out of the house, and was able to be driven to the depot.

This is the incident referred to by Major John G. Bourke, in his book, "On the Border with Crook," page 430.

The night we returned to the cabin after the above incident, when it was time to go to bed, the General and myself were assigned to one of the three beds. Mr. and Mrs. Tague occupied the second, and Petty the third. "Jack" the "buffalo skinner," bunked down on the floor near the warm stove with plenty of buffalo robes over him, and soon we were all asleep. About five in the morning, the old man called to Jack and said, "Get up and build the fire;" there was no answer; he called again and again, and no answer; Jack had evidently forgotten his name. "Gol darn you Jack, if you don't get up and build that 'er fire, I'll get up and build it myself," said the old man. I called to Petty; he was sound asleep. I rolled over and nudged the General, he was wide awake, and heard all the conversation, which we both enjoyed.



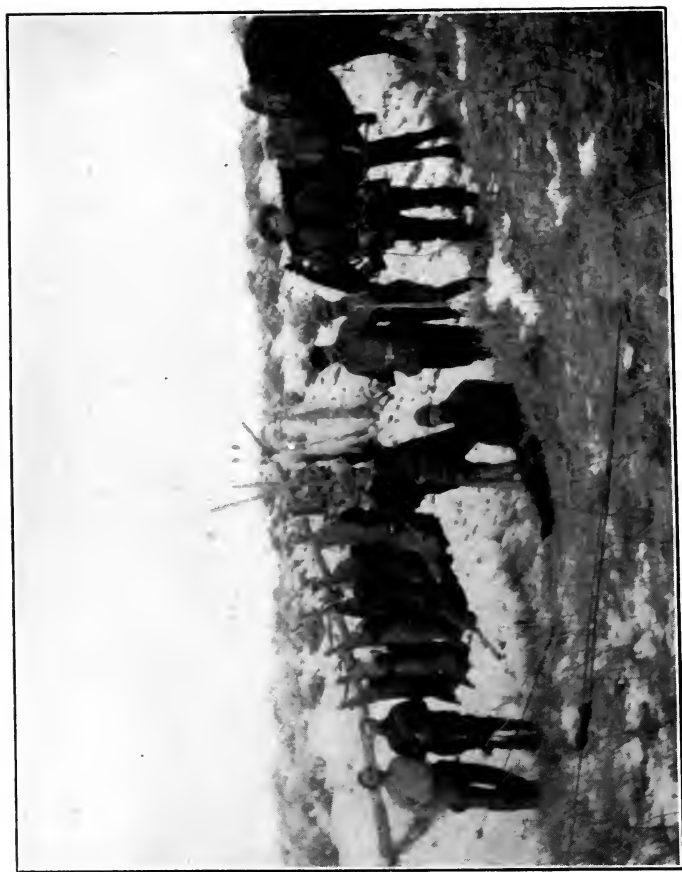
As a hunter of wild game on the Platte river I can safely say there is no hunting in the west in which the hunter encounters more peril than that of properly and systematically hunting wild geese on the Platte river, with all things to do that will insure success. In the spring birds come in great numbers when the Platte is still frozen. This is also the time of a rush of waters from the mountains. I have been on the ice snugly ensconced in a blind with hunting companions and heard the signal, a sound like the roar of a cannon, when the increasing flood would break through the ice and spout water up ten feet in the air, and the increasing torrent almost equal to a Johnstown flood, would cover the ice with from six inches to a foot of water in a short space of time. The open channels would raise twelve to twenty inches in less than half an hour. Then is the time of danger in getting back to shore. A goose hunter will take more desperate chances than a hunter of any other game—not even excepting a bear hunter. To their credit be it said goose hunters on the Platte were generally equal to the emergency and few losses of life have been recorded to my knowledge.

One of our successful hunts on the Platte river was when General Crook, John Petty and myself made a trip southwest of Papillion, with the General's big spring wagon, four mules and a two-mule army wagon with tents, provisions, help and a cook. We arrived on the bank of the Platte soon after noon. While the men were putting up the tent and getting camp in order for supper we three strolled along the shore looking for sandbars that could be

reached by wading, we having no boat with us on the trip. The bars were entirely bare of birds as the geese were all out in the corn fields feeding. It was in March and nearly all the ice had gone out of the river. The day was fair and no wind. There were a few flocks of "Hutchins," with occasionally a flock of "White Fronts" flying up and down the river warily, but none came down to our decoys. All we expected to accomplish was to find the bars the geese would come to roost on when they began flying in from the fields later in the day and possibly get under the flight coming in. The afternoon was spent in prospecting.

We succeeded in locating a bar where great flocks of geese came to roost within a mile of where our tent was pitched. When morning came, all of our decoys made of sheet iron and painted, and mallard decoys, had been carried to the bank opposite the bar when the geese came to roost. We had a warm breakfast an hour before daylight. The wind was in the northeast and at the signal "honk" all the geese along the river arose and began their flight to the cornfields on the south shore. They were as plenty as pigeons in the early days. We got no shooting from the morning flight out. Now was the time to make all preparations for their return from morning feeding. As the day became cloudy the flight began earlier than it would had the sun shone.

All hands gathered the guns, ammunition, decoys, overcoats and lunch and waded into the river, picking our way through the shallow places. Arriving at the roosting ground we dropped our loads and began gathering pieces of drift wood from the bars



Hunting Big Game—Three days' kill.



and bringing in from the tow heads brush and willows with which to build "blinds." This being finished the goose and duck decoys were then properly placed the flat side towards the south. We had scarcely got everything in shape and the hunters in their blinds than the flocks began appearing in the south. The first was a flock of Canadas, that came over Petty's blind and were just ready to alight among his decoys when two shots from his ten bore Parker dropped five of them right among his decoys.

\* \* \*

### INDIAN SYMPATHY.

General Hatch, the commanding officer of Fort Robinson, Nebraska, who was in camp near Antelope Springs, north of Casper, Wyoming, wired me:

"Collins: send for your friend Hayes and join me. We have Bat and Indian guides, pack and saddle mules, and we are in the heart of a good game country."

I sent a telegram to Hayes who started immediately for Omaha. W. F. Fitch was going up that way in his private car to show his successor, Mr. Horace G. Burt, over the road and we joined them at Omaha. Mr. Fitch took his car up beyond Casper, the end of the road. The General had sent an ambulance from his camp fifty miles to meet us and carry us to a landmark called "Teapot," where we arrived about dark.

The day before had been full of adventures for the hunters in camp. Two or three grizzly bears

had been killed, deer and antelope were abundant and occasionally a band of elk was seen. The day before our arrival Bat had killed a bear and near a springy place on the mountain side had seen the fresh footprint of a bear of greater size which interested him greatly. The next morning a party of six of us, including Bat and the Indians Red Bear and Red Sack, packed a mule with our supplies and bedding and started over the mountain to be out all night and sleep in the open air. I was paired with Bat and a lively chase I had keeping up with him over the mountains and through the canyons. We passed the carcass of the bear he had killed the day before from which he had taken the hide only. We were on foot the principal part of the day and towards dusk we climbed to the top of a steep mountain where we could view the country for miles around to see if we could get a glimpse of the big bear out feeding. The wind blew a gale on the high mountain and we found a shelter behind a bunch of rocks where we waited until dark, but saw no sign of a bear. It was rough traveling in the dark, back over the rocks and through the timber to where our mules were tied, but Bat, as usual, went straight to the mules. We then had a three-mile ride to the camp where we found the party with a camp fire.

The next morning Red Bear and I decided to make a tour north among the rocky ledges on our return to the main camp. We soon came to a gorge fully two thousand feet deep. At the top was a rim of rocks projecting over from under which we scared out eagles every few hundred yards. A more

desolate place or one better adapted for that kind of a bird to roost or nest could not be imagined. It was about noon when we reached the mouth of the gorge where we found our way down to a stream and unsaddled for lunch. About three hundred yards away two deer jumped from their beds just across the creek and stood looking at us while we got under cover to approach them. At a hundred yards I had a fine shot and killed a magnificent fat young buck. The interesting part of this kill was to see Red Bear "strip" the deer and prepare it for easy carrying behind his saddle, for we had a long ride to camp. First he cut the head off near the shoulder, took out the intestines, and then the liver which he ate raw, as is the Indian custom, then he skinned the deer, stripping the meat from leg bones and ribs, saving the loin and in fact all of the meat without an ounce of bone left, wrapped all of it in the hide, tied it behind his saddle with two buckskin strings and the whole roll as packed would not have weighed to exceed thirty pounds, while the deer alive would weigh one hundred.

After dressing the deer and eating lunch we turned south over a low divide and dropped into a low narrow valley of "bad lands." There was no water on either side, the valley sloped up to high, sharp ridges and the narrow dark lines showed the effect of rain on the ashy earth. The gullies leading to larger ones below were from two or three inches to three feet wide, some of them so deep a horse could be lost in them. Our horses were kept constantly jumping to clear them and occasionally as their hind feet would clear the opposite bank the

earth would give way and both hind legs would drop in. To go lower down the valley the gullies would be wider and deeper; to go higher up they were more numerous and would take us out of our course, so the Indian chose a middle trail. The further we rode towards camp the more difficult it became and more care was necessary in clearing chasms. The Indian stopped to adjust his pack while I rode on, placing me nearly a hundred yards in the lead. The gullies kept our horses constantly on the jump. Coming to one about three feet wide I spurred my horse and he fell on his side and shoulder with my leg under him to the knee and I had no little difficulty in dismounting and pulling my horse out of the gulley. Red Bear came up and with one look of disgust and an angry grunt he "heeled" his horse and urging him on, rode away as fast as possible, not knowing, and what was more not caring, whether or not my leg was broken or whether I could get out of this dilemma and reach camp. I was then obliged to ride at a slow pace. Finally the Indian was out of sight, having never looked back. Had the ground been hard the least that would have befallen me was a broken arm or leg in either case the Indian would have given me no assistance. It was dark when we reached camp and all the hunters were in, some with a deer or antelope behind their saddle and some with no game except an eagle killed on their way in.



**LOST NEAR CAMP.**

On one of our fall hunts to the Salt Creek country, Captain Patrick Henry Ray was in charge of the government transportation train that carried us down to where we first struck the creek and there we camped two days. Captain Ray was one of the sturdy army officers who was sent into the Arctic regions in search of General Greely and party, and who found them. Later he came to Omaha and was judge advocate on General Crook's staff. Besides Captain Ray, the other hunters of the party were A. S. Patrick, Webb Hayes and myself with Little Bat and another halfbreed Sioux, named Alex Mousseau, as guides. On this trip ten colored troopers from Fort Robinson were our assistants.

Some amusing incidents occurred on this trip. From our first camp, not finding game plentiful, we moved down below to our old land-mark which we had named "Pack Saddle Rock," because of its resemblance to a pack saddle. It stood out clear-cut away from the other rocks and could be seen from almost any direction for a distance of three or four miles. As our camp was usually made in the creek bottom among the scattering trees, obscured by precipitous sheltering bluffs, the hunters returning were always on the lookout for this rock.

Webb Hayes was somewhat handicapped by being a little nearsighted and we insisted on some one always accompanying him. Alex Mousseau was his companion on this day's hunt. With a liberal supply of lunch in their saddle pockets, plenty of ammunition and their rifles, after announcing their route, they started out soon after daylight for deer.

Hayes, depending wholly on his guide, Alex, found himself at dark five miles from camp. After being in the saddle all day and the guide not being very communicative, about dusk it became a very lonely ride. They, however, kept on a course that Hayes was willing to go and as dark came on the sage brush appearing to grow thicker and more difficult to get through, he gave his horse his head to follow his guide. A two hours' ride brought them in sight of a moving light, then another light, the latter being stationary. Alex could not account for these lights on the high flat, when he knew the camp was down fifty feet under a cut bank, where no light could be seen from higher land. They stopped and held a council. Hayes could plainly see the superstition of the guide who thought the moving light was guided by some spirit agency that taxed his courage.

"We are near camp, but we must keep away from those lights; they are what you call 'spooks,'" said Alex, and for fully an hour Hayes was compelled to follow the superstitious guide.

Captain Ray had sent half a dozen soldiers with all the wood they could carry on their backs, out on the sage brush flat above camp to build a signal fire. The night was dark and a lantern was necessary to guide the party so they could select a prominent place to build a fire that could be seen by belated hunters. These were the lights seen by Alex that he could not account for. Had it not been that the men keeping the fire up had fired three signal shots they might have wandered about all night half a mile from camp. Hayes understood the signal,



Hunting Big Game—Leaving Fort Fetterman.



Hunting Big Game—"Bunched up" on the Road.



Hunting Big Game—Crossing the Platte.



took the lead and in twenty minutes they were safe in camp.

It was eleven o'clock when they sat down to supper in the cook tent and we were all up and waiting for an account of their adventures. Alex seemed inclined to shirk all responsibility and lay the blame on Hayes for being lost within half a mile of camp and as they sat at the table recounting the adventures of the day and finished up on the delay of coming into camp, Alex said:

"I was all right; if I had somebody along but a tenderfoot who couldn't help any we'd have been in two hours ago."

The next night it was necessary to send men on the flat again to build a fire and fire signal shots. Nine o'clock had come and Captain Ray had not come in. This did not greatly concern the party, he being an old campaigner who had served years in the army besides having journeyed through Alaska, the frozen polar seas and about as near to the north pole as any living man had approached it, in search of Greely's party. So it was natural that we paid little heed to the belated captain, except that it was a custom that no hunter would turn into his bed until everybody was in camp. Darkness came. Nine, ten and eleven o'clock. The fire was burning above the bank, three volleys of signal shots had been fired and yet no answer. It was concluded the captain had followed some game he had wounded and when night came had picketed his horse out, lying down on the pine needles and had gone to sleep—the natural thing for a man lost in the mountains

to do. When midnight came the soldiers were called in and we all went to bed.

An hour before daylight Captain Ray came into camp, brisk and lively and at once recounted his wounding a black tail deer that he had followed until dark. He frankly acknowledged that as he had no idea where camp was when dark came he concluded to unsaddle. He picketed out his horse and between the trunks of two trees he made a fire and lay down between them—less than three miles from camp.

\* \* \*

### IN THE SAND DUNES.

Twenty-five miles north of Casper, Wyoming, is Sand Spring in the heart of the sand hills and the "sand dunes." Going towards Salt creek we passed a dry alkali lake on the high mesa. After a gradual ascent our trail led into a low sag that in a few miles opened out into a narrow valley carpeted with wet, sour grass, indicating water here and there. By digging down a foot or two an abundance of alkali water could be had which, in a way, supplied campers.

We followed up this ravine four or five miles and found occasional pools of water—being in the sand hills there were no running streams. Just south of where we camped we passed over a long grade of sand running east and west from one bluff to another, a distance of over three hundred yards. It was as regular in width and as level on top as a railroad grade and from twelve to twenty feet high, complete-

ly damming the stream. Above it a lake had formed of several acres. On its west banks were the sand dunes, two to three hundred feet high, bearing not a sprig of vegetation and the prevailing winds being from the northwest, this loose sand had been blown across the valley and formed this monumental freak of the elements. There was no other water nearer than the Platte river on the south, or Salt creek on the west, about equal distances, fully twenty-five miles away. The hills around were a great range for antelope and morning, noon and night great bands were seen on the sand bluffs on all sides of the lake, within three hundred yards to one-half mile waiting to come to water and evidently wondering who was encroaching on their rights to drink at this lake.

On our first trip to the Salt Creek country, General Crook and myself started ahead of the hunting outfit and traveled to the north. Having missed the trail, that at a point half way turned sharp west, after traveling twelve to fifteen miles following a game trail, we lost our bearings. The General said:

"We had better turn back, follow up this draw, find the trail of the party and follow it directly to camp."

We were following a grassy draw five or six miles long and were in the brakes out of the sand hills going north, so we immediately turned about. On the way out we rode in the bottom of the draw following a game trail and were at all times in the midst of antelope, but as our return to the railroad would lead us back to the Springs when our hunt was finished, we deferred killing these. The coun-

try was rough, broken and the only sign of civilization was the trail of a round-up wagon. Antelope were in bands of a hundred or more and black tail deer were on all sides of us. At most we could only pack one animal behind each saddle and, not knowing how far we must travel, we paid no attention to either deer or antelope. Following this draw some six miles on the back track at every turn two, three or five deer would jump up ten to twenty yards away and we counted seventy-two in six miles of travel.

Finding the trail of our outfit we followed it six hours before reaching camp. On the day's ride we were forty-five miles in the saddle, arriving after dark. The tents were up, a roaring campfire of logs made just under a cut bank thirty feet high, above the creek bed and a good supper awaited us.

\* \* \*

### **A WATERHAUL IN THE WIND RIVER RANGE.**

One November General George Crook, General T. H. Stanton, A. E. Touzalin, Webb Hayes and myself made a trip from Rawlins of nearly two hundred miles north of the Union Pacific railroad, in an ambulance sent down from Fort Washakie. On our arrival there we procured a camp outfit and went over to the Wind river, following it up, crossing Bull Lake fork, then up the North fork and over on the East fork. This carried us into the lofty mountains south of Jackson Hole. We traveled as far as our wagon loaded with grain could go, then left it on a high ridge in snow a foot deep, in plain sight for full fifty miles on all sides, and with pack and saddle mules we pushed on towards the timbered



mountains, and went into camp in a basin surrounded by low, sharp foothills, streaked with crooked black lines which we discovered were rivulets of water from springs and melting snow. The weather was intensely cold, sun dogs were visible every day in the east and south and the snow was eighteen inches deep. There appeared to be no other water for miles around, and having no guide and with some misgivings, we worked our way to the center of these black lines and camped on a small running stream. Here we spent five days and hunted in all directions as far as we could ride through the rough country and return to camp each night.

Returning to camp on the fifth day, a storm of soft wet snow came up and the old snow began to melt. I was alone and as I came through an opening in a patch of willows there were signs of an abandoned Indian camp. Willows were bent over and their tops tied together with bark. The bark was eaten off from other willows by porcupines and by Indian ponies. Piles of small horns and bones lay around. I found my saddle horse was walking on a soft substance that on investigation, proved to be hair from deer, elk and antelope. A party of over three hundred Indians, consisting of Chief Red Cloud and his band of Ogalallas, had been on a visit to Chief Washakie and the Shoshone Indians a month before and on their return to Red Cloud agency had camped here two weeks and killed about all the game in the vicinity. To reduce the weight of their packs they had camped on this spot and sweated the hair off all the skins. For a space of

fifty feet square the hair covered the ground six or eight inches deep. As we later learned, their kill had been seven hundred antelope, three hundred deer and nearly all the elk within twenty miles of their camp and they packed the skins away on their ponies to Red Cloud agency.

We had not seen a thing of life, bird or animal. I should have excepted the very small white snow rabbit called "Conie," smaller than a guinea pig, snow white except a chestnut color on each side of the neck which we found away up on the smooth rolling mountains of snow where there was no sign of timber or brush. Away beyond them were the timbered mountains of the Wind River range.

Webb Hayes and Mr. Touzalin brought out a bear trap and packed it over to a bunch of thick pines where one of the hunters told of seeing signs of a small bear. After setting the trap in a favorable place and putting a log twelve feet long through the six-inch chain ring to prevent its being carried away by any kind of game that might be caught, both started back for camp. They separated and Mr. Hayes followed along the edge of the timber and the two hunters were soon lost to each other. Although Mr. Hayes was somewhat handicapped by the effect of the snow on his eyes he caught sight of a small black object moving aimlessly among the big trees and, dismounting, he waded through the deep snow, dodging around and behind the trees until near enough to make the discovery that the object was a small black bear cub which he killed and brought in behind his saddle. On account of its

size it seemed rather an insignificant specimen of a bear and furnished no end to the amusement it gave General Crook and the continual chaffing he gave Mr. Hayes. This incident whetted the interest in the trap the next morning.

On the fourth day in camp General Stanton, Mr. Touzalin and I made an early start to prospect the valley leading west. In an hour a fall of damp snow set in, the flakes being nearly as large as a hen's egg. We were well protected by rubber coats and leggins and continued on for seven miles when we got off our mules under a fir tree one hundred and fifty feet high. Under the shelter of the sloping limbs we built a fire and ate our lunch, then started for camp, our journey having been uneventful, and no game was seen. The great flakes of wet snow continued to fall and melt, and we found great difficulty in traveling, for the feet of our horses, besides balling up at every step, found gumbo mud and their feet would continually ball with the snow and mud making it hard traveling. We were four hours on the journey of seven miles to camp where we found General Crook and others of the party had already arrived. The colored soldiers had spent the day in snaking in from the mountain side stumps and butts of pine trees and had a pile as large as a freight car. Our arrival was a signal for starting the fire. In an hour it blazed up fifty feet in the air and seemed to light up the whole country for miles around. After supper we decided to move out of the country the next morning, for we discovered that while the ground appeared solid when we made camp on the frozen snow, when it thawed

we were in a bog of bad lands, and in one more day of wet weather it would have been next to impossible to get out at all. So we broke camp early and after an hour's travel came in sight of our grain wagon five miles ahead standing out on the great white sheet of snow a picture of abandonment. For three days we traveled towards the post and made out last camp at Bull Lake fork, where in a swift torrent of open water, we caught trout weighing two to three pounds each. This is a most picturesque spot of waterfall and boulders.

The next day by noon we were at Fort Washakie having been eleven days out without killing a head of game except a cub bear and one bear trapped. The disappointment of this journey only whetted our appetites for another trip before the snow went off and the following March we went south and east of Rock creek in the Sierra Madre mountains lying west of North Park, Colorado, and camped on Sheep creek at the foot of the mountains the second day out. This was counted the very roughest and most difficult of all our mountain trips. We struck straight east across the country, rough, rolling plains covered with sage brush, cut up with wide coolies and ravines, the banks so steep we had to "lariat" down and "double" up the opposite side. We found snow at the foot of the mountains and an abundance of dead pine trees for fuel, but no water and the animals ate snow and pawed it away to reach the grass. There were no foothills or canyons to cross for the plains gradually sloped up to benches and rocky gorges with no timber. Along the foothills the deep ravines running away to the

valley were filled with snow ten to forty feet deep. These we crossed early in the day for we could ride over the frozen crust, but when the sun came out rivulets of water ran under the snow. Our saddle animals would plunge into the snow and where they would sink they would go belly deep in water and slush, the rider dismount and the animal would wallow up with his mount dragging after him holding on to either the bridle reins or the animal's tail. On this trip Major Lord killed five mountain sheep one morning and although only two miles from camp it took the packers an entire day to pack them into camp. General Crook devoted his time with Chief Packer Moore to finding evidence of a bear being out of his hole, but found no sign. In fact the country they hunted over was barren of game and the snow very deep. Charles Grosholz of Philadelphia, a relative of (the then Captain) John V. Furay (since retired as colonel), depot quartermaster at Omaha, was one of our guests and it fell to me to see that he was in camp every night. The only mountain climbing he had ever done was on a railroad train. My saddle mule was named "Jump" and his "Jane," one on account of the uncertainty of his gait, and the other we could only conclude was because of her amiable disposition, which all "Janes" are supposed to have.

\* \* \*

#### **ANTELOPE HUNTING.**

In the sand dunes north of Casper Lieutenant (now Colonel) Mathias of the Fifth cavalry, stationed at Fort Robinson, was in charge of the gov-

ernment transportation that took our party over on "Salt Creek and the Dry Cheyenne," one of our favorite hunting grounds for black tail deer, antelope and bear; we camped at Sand Lake the first night out from Casper, about 4:30 p. m. in the month of November. This was about the time of day the antelope came to water at the lake, there being no other water nearer than the Platte river, twenty-five miles away. No attention was given the antelope for we expected to make camp at the same lake on our return, and in a short time "top out" our load of elk, deer and bear, with all our teams could haul back to the railroad, with antelope. The next morning we made an early start for Salt Creek and when well on our way it began snowing. Along the trail there was no place to camp where we could find water or grass, and we plodded over the divide between the Platte and Salt Creek through the snow and sand and reached Salt Creek in time to put up our tents and finish supper before dark. The next morning there was good "tracking snow" in the valley, and aside from the fact that a dry summer had left the uncertain stream with little or no water, except in holes and cow tracks and the water was strong with alkali and about the color of coffee, by digging wells we found plenty of the same kind of water, of sweetish taste, the party as well as the animals drinking so freely that both men and animals were completely upset. The next morning we concluded to change camp and go over to the "Dry Cheyenne," for there was danger of our being snowed in where we were, and this was a fortunate move, for the trail we came in on was deep in snow



Antelope Hunters—"Antelope Very Cunning."





on the divide. The General had consulted Bat who said, "we can pull up the gulch, climb a long sage brush hill, and if the snow is not over a foot deep on the divide, we can make camp by sundown." We made the drive and reached the spring in due time and this was to be our permanent camp. Besides Bat we had three Indian guides, "Red Bear," "Red Sack" and "Short Bull." From this camp we hunted a week and killed three bear, three mountain sheep, the last of the race on this range, also one bull elk, and he was also the last of his kind in the vicinity, and a wagonload of black tail deer.

On our return to the "Fetterman Switch," where we embarked from, we again camped at Sand Springs about noon. There were bands of antelope scattered about coming in to water and watching our tents, teams and animals. While at lunch Lieutenant Day said to Bat, "How near can you approach one of the bands with two or three of us along?" "Well, if we take a little time we can get near enough to kill all we want with revolvers," said Bat. After lunch while our mules were being saddled, Bat looked over the situation and we were soon off to try the experiment. Bat led the way and we followed along down the valley for three miles, then turned west and came north against the wind, alarming one or two small bands to which we paid no attention for Bat had selected a band of about a hundred. We stopped and held a council. "They are just over that second ridge, let them feed over to the low ground then we will gallop to the ridge and 'you fellers' stay back while I take a look," was Bat's suggestion. Reaching the

ridge we dismounted and Bat crawled and looked over the ground; presently he returned and said, "We will wait here a few minutes. They will feed over the next ridge and into a draw that runs to camp. When we get to the draw we must all come up in a bunch, lean over our horses' necks and cross twenty feet in plain sight. If their heads are down feeding they won't notice us and we can ride to the next ridge and get within fifty feet of the band."

His directions were followed. We crossed the draw without being seen and when we dismounted Bat took another look, then dropped back to us and said: "Tie your horses to the sage brush and we get in fifty feet of the band." All abreast we walked carefully to the top and found we were less than fifty feet from where the antelope were feeding; the band was bunched up like sheep and we began firing. Before they got out of shooting distance Day had brought down three (Day was the crack rifle shot of his regiment), Bat killed five, myself and my companion four, and in less than five minutes the party had twelve dead antelope in sight. Each hunter dressed his own kill, all except Day having had considerable experience in this. In half an hour Bat had dressed his five, dragged them up in a pile and from an adjoining ridge in sight of camp he signalled for pack mules to come out and take the surplus game to camp that we could not carry behind our saddles. Day was a little loath to acknowledge that he was not thoroughly "up" in the art of dressing game, but he cut a hole in the side of a small buck, then cut down

to the brisket, took out the entrals, then lifted it onto his shoulder, in his effort to hang it on the saddle horn before rolling it behind his saddle. He missed the horn and it fell back over his head, completely encasing his hat, head and shoulders in the bleeding carcass. One having no experience in loading a freshly killed deer or antelope on a pack saddle cannot imagine the difficulty in handling it, and our hunters only deplored Day's misfortunes without criticism.

\* \* \*

### **HOW TO PACK A BEAR TRAP.**

Preparing for one of our hunting trips up to the Wind River mountains. Webb Hayes shipped to Omaha a fifty-pound bear trap. At Speigle Grove, his home (the former home of Ex-President Hayes near Fremont, Ohio,) the Hayes farm grew the very finest of sicle pears. Webb put the bear trap in a barrel, loose, then filled the barrel with pears—also loose. When it reached me at Omaha, the pears and bear trap were thoroughly mixed and the express agent threatened to throw it in the river unless it was taken from the office at once. The pears, of course, did not prove to be in a choice condition, but after putting the trap under the garden hose for a day, it came out in fair condition and on this particular hunt proved an interesting addition to our sport.

A fifty-pound bear trap has a stout chain attached at the end of a six-inch, heavy iron ring to slip over

an eight or ten-foot log to prevent its being carried away when a "varmint" was caught.

From our camp out on the east fork of the north fork of Wind river (today this may seem easy sailing) Mr. Tonzalin, Webb and the Indian, Red Sack, carried the trap on saddle over the mountain to a low, grassy ravine some five miles from camp. They also dragged along in a bag a lot of highly seasoned entrails of game. The bait was hung on the limb of a pine tree five feet high from the ground and limbs of trees piled on each side, so a bear to get to the bait, must go in at the open end and climb up the tree. Here the trap was placed at the foot of the tree. For a day or two the hunters were so busy hunting over the high snow-capped mountains in search of game no attention was paid to the trap. General Stanton remarked one evening in camp:

"If somebody don't look out for that bear trap, something will carry it away."

The next morning Mr. Tonzalin, Webb and the Indians hiked away for the trap, but no trap was to be found where it was left. Following the rough trail they found it in a grove of fir trees, the ten-foot log still fastened in the ring and a fine, young black bear caught in it by one forefoot.

It was impossible for the bear to have dragged the trap out of the thick grove of trees where it was first placed, so there is no doubt the animal had picked up the log and carried it with the other front leg to where it was found some fifty feet away, was Tom Moore's opinion.

**OUT ON THE TEAPOT BAD LANDS.**

This hunt for big game was up near the "Teapot," and the mules, wagons, buck-board and riding horses were put in a freight car at the ranch of A. S. Patrick at Patrick Siding, six miles northwest of Fremont, Neb., on the Chicago & Northwestern railroad, and shipped out to Fetterman yards, west of Douglas, Wyo. Two days later our party, A. S. Patrick, Robt. E. Patrick, John Patrick, Henry Homan, Little Bat, Race Newcomb, Mr. Rainey, and myself started out. There was a young fellow out on my ranch on the Labonte creek, who knew the country we were going into, and I suggested we take him along also, as that would give us three guides. Percy Pollard was the youngster, and I was quite sure he would hold his end up with any man in the crowd, and if he didn't throw the lazy, trifling cook out of camp and "fit himself in," he would make himself useful to every hunter in the party. He said he would go along and "wrangle" the horses.

When our wagons, horses, tents and supplies were unloaded at the Fetterman yards, above Douglas, we pulled out for "Teapot," making first camp at Sand springs. The next was near the head of Salt creek, and after putting up our tents and tying our horses for the night, it began snowing. When morning came nearly a foot of snow covered the ground. Al Patrick, with Little Bat, Homan and Percy, saddled up and were off for a pine ridge on the south soon after daylight, the rest of the party going in other directions, as their fancy dictated.

By the time we were all starting, we heard a "Yep, yep, yep," from Percy, and through the flying snow, riding a mule with some objects at the end of his lariat, he came, bounding and gliding over the snow and sage brush, and this prompted us to halt and wait until he came up. The mule was on a stiff-legged lope, and Percy made a swing half round the tent, in cowboy fashion—and in the most artistic fashion—to "unload" in front of us. Less than half a mile from camp, Patrick and Bat had killed a fine black tail buck and a doe. After discussing how they could get the game back to camp without returning themselves and losing time, Percy remarked, "You fellows go on, I'll get 'em into camp." His mule never had been packed, and no one in the party wanted to ride him, even with only the saddle on. Percy dressed the two deer, passed his rope over the heads of them, the other end around his saddle horn.

"Now," he said, "give me a push," and away he sailed over the snow on a gallop, dragging the deer after him.

This tallied one good turn to the cowboy's credit. Every day he scored, and became a general favorite, for he had gumption and knew how to do things.

Another conspicuous event was on our last day before leaving for the railroad. The entire party, with Little Bat in the lead, started out together to finish our hunt, so if more game was killed than we could pack behind our saddles, it would not make it necessary for an extra trip to bring it in. We traveled all in a bunch, while Percy rode his cow pony and led the mule with a saw buck pack saddle



The Author Ready for the Hunt—8 a. m., 20 degrees below zero.





strapped along to pack game on, but we had learned by this time that the cowboy had ways of his own of getting out of a dilemma, so chaffing was done rather gingerly. Percy said, "This mule has got to earn his grain, and if we kill game enough Mr. Mule must do his share of the packing—we didn't bring him along just to look at the scenery."

We had been on the way an hour, when suddenly Bat halted and leaned his head down on the horse's neck, swinging around to the left. Without any instructions we followed his tactics. Just over the crest of the hill, in among the rocks, scarcely one hundred yards away, he had discovered seven deer. The wind whistling through the trees made so much noise the game knew nothing of our presence. We all dismounted, tying our horses to sage brush, and leaving Percy with the mule, we crawled on hands and knees, following Bat, until he signaled us to raise up and fire. Five deer went down at the first fire, and before the other two had run fifty yards they fell also, scarcely a minute passed in killing the seven deer. In preparing them for packing to camp, the heads and legs were taken off and the bodies dressed to lighten the loads. Bat loaded the largest buck behind his saddle, and Homan took the next, leaving five yet to be packed. The other saddle horses would not carry, and it was supposed Percy's mule was out of business for this work, and after all kinds of suggestions by every one of the party except himself, the young fellow butted in: "This cussed mule has got to carry all five. We didn't bring him along to show him the country, and if one of you fellows will stay with me to

help me load and give the mule a push, I'll get them to camp all right." That speech silenced every man in the party. "If the old shave tail will carry two," said Patrick, "we will snake over the other three, for our horses won't carry." We were standing in six inches of snow. Percy asked Homan to hand him his rope. He tied the front and hind legs of each deer at the knees; he pushed the mule along side a high bank, pulled his legs from under him and threw him to the ground. One deer was put on each side of the pack saddle with its back down. When made fast, we lifted two and tied them on crossways; the fifth deer was laid in the middle, and when all were securely lashed, Percy said: "I want two strong men here."

Five of us took hold and lifted the mule to his feet; he staggered about a minute, tried to kick and shake off his load; finding this entirely useless, he suddenly started away, and so well did the mule behave under this big load,—so securely were the five deer packed,—but a single stop was made on the road to camp to tighten up. So Percy with his mule packed with the five deer arrived at camp with the rest of us.

The load was unlashd, the pack saddle taken off, and the mule turned loose. He grunted two or three times, lay down and rolled over, and was soon as docile as a kitten. During all these proceedings Bat had made no remark, but as he turned to go to the tent he said,—“That boy Percy is a good one,—he is no ‘sooner.’”

The next morning we pulled out for Fetterman. To prevent waiting at these yards, where there was

only a switch and loading pens for cattle trains, it was necessary to inform Mr. C. C. Hughes, that princely good fellow, the superintendent of the Northwestern Railroad, that he could send his special car and a freight car to load our deer and camp equipments for home, and to provide hay and grain for the stock on our arrival at the Fetterman yards. Again the young cowboy came to the front. Percy said, "It's sixty-two miles to Glen Rock; I can ride there tomorrow and have hay and grain at the Fetterman yards the day before you reach there."

We arrived the next day at three o'clock, and found the young fellow waiting with the forage provided, having made two or three trips back and forth from Fetterman to Glen Rock after his sixty-two mile ride the first day.

The conspicuous references to Percy,—if the reader has followed them carefully—will show he was capable of making good in other ways than wrangling horses for a hunting party.

\* \* \*

### INCIDENTS.

The many incidents of these royal hunts are often of more real interest than any that are much longer reaching a climax.

Our Indian guide, "Short Bull," who was a hundred yards ahead of Henry Homan and myself, stopped suddenly, and beckoned us to come to him. There was good tracking snow on the ground, and he pointed to a trail of several deer that had crossed the valley during the night, not half a mile from

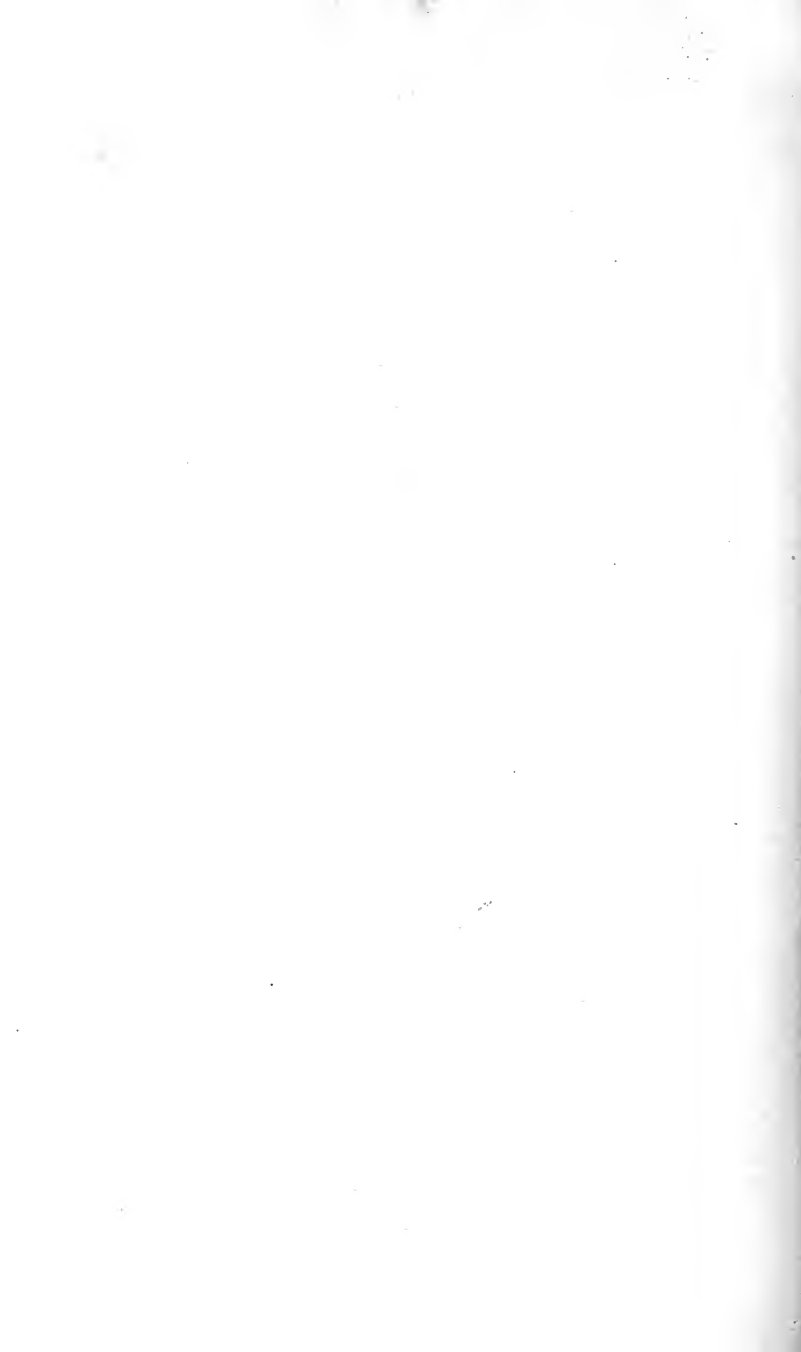
our camp, going towards a bunch of bad land hills to the north. Holding up his hands he indicated seven in all, and by holding both open hands over his head, it indicated two were bucks with big horns; closing one hand tight and jerking it towards the ground indicated that we would dismount, and pointing his fingers away from his eyes and sweeping over the country ahead meant that we were to remain there until he looked around.

In five minutes he returned and motioned us to get on our horses and follow, for the deer were traveling fast. Following the trail, he led us over a ridge of bad lands, where the descent was very steep and the earth as soft as ashes. Down we plunged, my horse planting his four feet firmly in the soft earth, and stiff-legged, slid part of the way down, then stumbled, and I went headlong over his head, landing squarely on my back, ten feet ahead of him—leaving a few tender spots on my shoulder. I again mounted and followed on. We were soon out of the bad lands and going up a grassy ravine, with low hills on each side.

Between Indians and wild game, I am forced to the belief that a great sympathy exists. Suddenly, Short Bull stopped, dismounted, threw the reins over the pony's head and dropped them on the ground. (This is "tying your horses to the ground"). Three or four draws led out of the valley, and the Indian was as keen to investigate each scent as a pointer dog would be on a covey of quail. Looking back, he nodded to us that the game was very near. From the trail they had begun feeding,



"Fussin'" About Camp.



and were as likely to be in one draw as another, so we got off our horses and dropped the reins.

The peculiar antics of Mr. Short Bull were interesting. Leaving the trail he would crawl to the top of one ridge, then back and over the next. Peering over a ridge at the head of a draw not forty feet from where we stood, he suddenly dropped flat on the ground and backed out and joined us. By signs he made us understand that the seven deer were right "over there"—the two big bucks nearest to us, and all with their heads down feeding. Now Homan was alive and so fidgety he trembled like a leaf. He raised his head, put his rifle to his shoulder, which the guide and myself also did, and in an instant three shots rang out. The two bucks and a small doe fell in their tracks. But Short Bull was not satisfied; mounting his pony, he galloped up the ravine, while the four deer ran to his left.

By the time the guide returned, we had the three deer dressed and all tied behind our saddles. The remaining four did not go but four or five hundred yards away. The older animals will not go far away from the younger ones (a mother instinct.) At times they will come back to the spot, and a hunter knowing this frequently kills a fawn on purpose to bring the mother back within shot.

By the skillful maneuvering of Short Bull we again came on to the four deer, and our three shots brought down three more of the band—only one escaping out of seven. The only credit due to Homan and myself was that we hit our game, not because of any superior knowledge of the habits of deer, or our own great skill in coming onto them.

If you want any lessons as to killing large game, find such a hunter as "Little Bat," or look up a Sioux Indian who knows its habits. The chief thing to learn is how to trail a wounded animal over any kind of ground.





## MISCELLANEOUS STORIES

### WORKING FOR WAGES.

When I managed the banking house of Nowlan & Weary, at Helena, Montana, being counted an expert in judging values of gold dust taken from the various gulches, the firm paid me \$500.00 per month salary in gold. At this time \$1.00 in gold coin was rated at upwards of \$2.50 in United States currency. At this rate my salary amounted to \$1,250.00 per month in United States currency—not a bad salary for a young man twenty-four years old. In addition to this, the firm presented me with a gold quartz nugget worth \$125.00 and \$75.00 in cash, the price of steamboat passage from Fort Benton to Omaha. The latter luxury I did not avail myself of, coming down the Missouri river in my own open boat, rowed by hand, twenty-one hundred miles.

\* \* \*

### IS THIS CONSCIENCE MONEY?

Not many years ago, an attorney in San Francisco wrote me a letter of which this is the substance:

"I am directed to send you \$200.00, which I will do on receipt of a letter from you saying where it will reach you. It will be useless to make inquiry; the money belongs to you, and on your definite reply I will forward it."

I answered the letter promptly and in due course of mail received a draft for \$200.00. Although it came in a draft of a California bank on Chicago and was duly honored, no doubt it was sent **there** to conceal the identity of the sender. I took the attorney's advice, accepted the money, and hope it relieved the mind of the person causing it to reach me.

\* \* \*

### HUSTLING.

On my various journeys through the west, before the days of railroads west of the Missouri river, I crossed the Rocky mountains on foot, on horseback, by wagon, and by stage coach, nine times.

\* \* \*

### THE SQUAW MAN.

Nick Janice came to Fort Laramie in 1847, and engaged in free trapping. Later he was employed by one of the fur companies. In the winter of '48-'49, he was employed by Captain Stansbury, a government engineer, who in the spring of 1849 surveyed the Great Salt Lake and surroundings. Later he returned as far as Cheyenne Pass, left the surveying party, and at once "threw in" with the Indians. In the fall of 1850 he married in Indian fashion a Sioux woman, who called herself Red Cloud's sister, (John Hunton now at old Fort Laramie is my authority for the above). Nick at once

began trading and trapping, and accumulated a few head of horses. Later he acted as guide and interpreter for the government, and died at or near Pine Ridge agency in 1903. His knowledge of the ways of the world were limited; he could neither read nor write, and coming from near St. Charles, Mo., was known as a Missouri Frenchman. His traits of character all leaned towards the lazy, idle Indian life.

On my arrival at Fort Laramie in '72 Nick was preparing to take up a ranch thirty miles from the fort at the Big Springs (where now is an extensive and well improved ranch owned by Colonel J. H. Pratt and the Leiter estate), as soon as the Indian agency, then located there, was moved over on White river, where the town of Crawford, Nebraska, now stands. This occurred a year or two later. At this time his family of half-breed boys and girls went with him on the ranch. John Reshaw (or Richard) in those days a daring, wild and reckless character of that country, who floated logs down the Platte and built a bridge across the river near Fort Fetterman, married Nick's oldest daughter, Emily. Reshaw was later killed by Two Bears, an Indian, at a camp near Mitchel's bottom on the Platte river some forty miles below Fort Laramie, and the vengeance that was later wreaked on that Indian borders too much on Indian savagery to be written in detail here. Suffice it then, that rumor was afloat that the wife treasured up this crime, and a day came when the slayer of her husband was camped only a few miles from her home. Here Emily took occasion to visit the camp of this same

Indian. Stories that were afloat in those days generally were true, and this was counted one of the horrible tragedies of the Platte valley.

Nick had accumulated a herd of a thousand or more cattle and was then quite a prominent cattle man. About his ranch there could at all times be seen from two to eight lodges of Indians.

Red Cloud by this time had become quite a prominent chief, always disgruntled from that time down to the present day, and the most hated Indian chief of any tribe. The Indians around the ranch were now all Nick's relations for he had married in Red Cloud's family and they at all times quartered on him, and as he told me, they were a terrible tax on his commissary, consuming a "beef" a week, and a barrel of sugar and a thousand pounds of flour a month. This he pondered over a long time, but saw no way of dispensing with these relations and cutting down expenses.

When the Black Hills gold excitement broke out and Jim Stephenson of Omaha (who, while serving as city councilman, was best known as "Modoc Jim") put on a stage line from Sidney to the Black Hills, then the country became altogether too civilized, and the Indian families moved back to the agency on White river, leaving Nick alone with his immediate family, numbering almost a dozen, old and young. His ranch was on the main road and convenient for a "swing station" where the stage made a change of horses daily, no meals being served. In those early days no stage was ever run very long that did not have "Star Mail Route" and it became necessary to establish postoffices and ap-

point postmasters along the Sidney route. Nick's ranch was central for a dozen or two ranches five to twenty-five miles away, and the cowboys soon acquired the habit of riding their cow ponies over to get the mail once a week. The only receptacle for mail at this office was a wooden box that had contained soap. When the stage arrived any one who happened to be standing at the door would hand in the bag which was opened at once, its contents were dumped into the wooden soap box and and every man in the room would help himself. Then the outgoing letters were thrown into a bag and handed to the driver and the coach would roll away. At the present time this loose way of handling Uncle Sam's mail would perhaps not be tolerated. I have seen the stage going from Cheyenne to Deadwood stop on the broad prairie, the driver hand out the mail bag from the front boot of the coach to a traveler riding alone in a buggy. He would dump the contents of the bag out on the ground. If there chanced to be a letter addressed to him he would take it out, put the letters and papers back in the bag, hand it up to the driver and both go on about their business. So there was no comparative reason for complaint at the way mail was handled at Nick's postoffice.

When James A. Garfield was nominated for president the National Republican Committee, according to custom, sent the usual circulars to all the postmasters over the country, asking for financial aid to conduct the campaign. Nick was included in the list, and he was notified by circular that \$100.00 contributed by him to the fund would be accepted

as his proportion, he being a "postmaster." This was a stunner to him and he at once harnessed his team and brought this circular up to Fort Laramie for me to read and advise him what he had better do in the premises.

About the same time the postoffice department at Washington sent out the usual circulars calling on all postmasters to account for the sale of postage stamps, also for the box rent of the office. All of these coming from Washington about the same time Nick got the impression that the United States government had a grudge against him, particularly, and wanted to break him up in business, as he said.

On his arrival at the fort the conversation was all by him and there was little for me to say. "Who is this man Garfield? I don't know him and I don't owe him any money. If he is a poor man and will come to my ranch, I will give him a beef and he can stay at my house a week, but I don't want his d—d postoffice at my ranch any more. Send him money for my box rent? Why I bought this box full of soap from you, Mr. Collins, and you know I paid for it. Send money for stamps? I never had any stamps but what I bought from you. I think these people in Washington are trying to rob me and I won't stand for it." Down at the ranch there was a man by the name of Godfrey. Nick said he could do "pen writin'" and he was going back to throw that postoffice out on the trail and have Godfrey write Mr. Garfield he didn't want him to send any more circulars to his ranch.

When Nick returned to the ranch, true to his word, he put all the letters and papers that were

left over in a canvas sack, tied it with a string, and when the stage came along he handed the bag to the driver saying, "You can take the postoffice some place else, I won't have it at my ranch any longer."

The civilizing effect of a stage running through the Indian country had its educational effects also, and there was occasionally talk of schools, teachers, etc. Later one Hophoff started a school nine miles below Fort Laramie. The settlers employed a teacher and it was not long until it was known that a school was in full blast down at Hophoff's. He being a man of large family, at least two-thirds of the pupils were his own children. The teacher, a woman, boarded at his home.

Janice by this time realized that civilization was about to encroach upon the wild country, and one of his daughters, named Nettie, about sixteen years of age, was selected as the proper member of the family to go to school. To arrange this properly he brought the young girl to my house at the fort and asked me to fix her up so she could go to school. She was rather neatly dressed and of fairly good proportion. Her face was round and full, lips inclined to be thick, complexion more on the order of an octoroon than a "half-breed" Indian, which is slightly tinged with a copper color; her teeth were white and of a shape and regularity to be envied by an American belle; black eyes; and hair as black and glossy as the color of a raven's wing, hung in loose curls over her shoulders. She was very shy, having never before been away from her own people, and during the afternoon and the following morning that she was at my house, although her

father would talk to her, I did not hear her utter a word. That was the Indian of it. I gave Nick a letter to Mr. Hophoff and explained that she wanted to live with his family and go to school. A week passed and I got no report on the new pupil. On the tenth day Hophoff came to the fort to report the girl missing. She had left his house the afternoon before, and nothing had been heard of her since, so he came to the fort to ascertain if she had come that way. I sent a cowboy on horseback down to Janice's ranch thirty miles away to inquire if she had reached home and when he returned to the post he brought word that the girl was safe at home.

The next day was Sunday and Nick drove to the fort to buy some groceries and the account he gave of his daughter was amusing. He said Nettie could not talk "United States" and could not understand anything that was said to her, and she didn't want to go to school anyhow, so she wrapped her clothes in a shawl and "hit the trail" for home, wading the Platte river at the ford after dark, and arriving home about eight o'clock, wet up to her neck. At the ford near Nick's ranch the river was over two hundred feet wide, and in places was near three feet deep, and this is where she waded the river to reach her home.

With Nick's many shortcomings he did not neglect his personal appearance. During the many years I knew him from 1872, scarcely a month passed that I did not see him, and I cannot recall a time when he did not wear a black cloth suit, a grey felt hat and a white shirt. Among the ranchmen, cattlemen, and people traveling through the country,



the clothing worn was canvas copper-riveted trousers, woolen shirts and broad brimmed hats. So Nick's black suit always attracted more or less attention, and stood out conspicuously. Nick having married a squaw, he became entitled to draw government rations, and his children having Indian blood, they also were entitled to draw rations, when of age. Many of the early white settlers married squaws after an Indian fashion, and enjoyed the same privileges, and these are known as "squaw men."

\* \* \*

## **DOWN THE MISSOURI RIVER ON A STEAMBOAT.**

In 1868, the year after I shipped my mules overland, I made a second trip by stage from Omaha to Helena, and returned via Fort Benton on a stern wheel steamboat. At Fort Benton the only freight coming down was a few beef hides and dressed buffalo robes packed in bales of ten each, a bale weighing about one hundred pounds. A few hundred bales were loaded here, but the bulk of the cargo was put on further down the river at the various Indian trading camps, at Fort Berthold and old Fort Peck, and the Indian trading stores. When the manifest was complete the clerk of the boat told me there were sixty-five thousand buffalo robes on board. They were unloaded at Bismarck, Yankton and Sioux City.

Below the mouth of Judith river, our boat coming down passed an up-bound steamer that had snagged and sunk in ten feet of water, about twenty

feet from shore. It was in the country of the most hostile Indians, and they were inclined to dispute the right of any travel, even of a steamboat. In a few hours after the boat snagged the Indians bobbed up from behind every brush patch and tree and rock along the bank. Immediately after sinking the boat, the crew began preparations for defence against the Indians. They first hoisted several barrels of coal oil from below deck and got them on shore. All the inside cabin berths were stove in, the bucket planks taken off the wheel and put on the outside of the cabin wall, and the berth mattresses placed between, to ward off the bullets, for the Indians had guns as well as bows and arrows. This was completed none too soon; the barrels containing coal oil being easily handled were hoisted out and rolled on shore over the gang planks. By this time no less than five hundred Grosventre Indians had collected on the bank, and believing nothing but "minnewa-kon" (fire water) or whiskey was ever contained in barrels, they were getting ready to make a raid on the stuff and have a glorious time. To make sure of securing the entire lot, they had moved their camp down to the river bank, and the Indians called out to the officers of the boat that they would make a raid on the barrels and if they met any opposition they would go on board and kill everybody on the boat.

It was a freight steamer, carrying no passengers, and the captain, mate, pilots, cabin boys, "roustabouts," etc., including one chamber-maid (a white woman), did not exceed twenty-five all told. The boat had hauled in the gang plank, and being

fortified as above stated, they had nothing to fear against the five hundred Indians on shore. The captain had sent a courier on foot some two hundred miles to Fort Benton to arrange for teams and a military escort from Fort Cook to guard the teams and come down overland after the cargo, which was quite a valuable one, and the captain was loath to leave it unprotected, having been in that situation already ten days, and no one but the chamber-maid (whom we afterward took on board our steamer, bound down) caring to desert the unfortunate boat. We tied up along side and visited back and forth for two or three hours. The marooned crew said they could protect themselves, so we cut loose and proceeded on our way down the river, leaving the crew on board the sunken steamer to their fate.

I learned later that the cargo was taken off safely and delivered by freight teams with a government escort at Fort Benton. The officers and crew then took passage on a steamer for St. Louis. Much of the cargo was only slightly damaged and very little was lost. Few people, except the rugged navigators of the Missouri in early days, know anything of the perils of such a voyage, and such experiences.

On the sunken boat a night watch was kept. Every morning arrows were found on the hurricane deck and many were found sticking in the pilot house, the Indians no doubt thinking the guard would always be located there.

**THE PACK TRAIN.**

One of the most picturesque and animated scenes witnessed on one of our many mountain hunts was the loaded government pack train under Thomas Moore, the chief packer and a dozen of his aids, coming down the heavily wooded and steep mountain side of the Sierra Madre mountains on our return from Grand Encampment lake. Each animal carried from two hundred and fifty to three hundred pounds, which included all of our deer, elk and antelope. When we reached the mountain top, all the mules came to a halt; the trails down the mountain side were dim and scattering, being the point at which the mules had followed game trails leading up on the mountain only a few days before. Each mule pricked up its long ears and looked wisely over the ground to see what trail it would follow. A forest of pine trees and jutting ledges of rocks covered the mountain side. Mr. Moore hailed the hunters and said: "You hunters pick your way ahead of the bell mare and mules, and keep out of their way or you will be run over." From our point of view, it looked easy for a half dozen mounted hunters to keep away from a loaded pack train. Moore yelled to the gray bell mare, "Go on, crazy," and the caravan started following us. In many places the trees grew so close together a naked mule could scarcely go between them, a pack sometimes adding a foot on each side. We heard the musical voice of the packers and the slangy phrases and cuss words that usually accompany their orders to the mules. Every animal picked out

his own route and started on a lumbering trot. In a few minutes they were about to overrun us. A pack mule would start between two trees and when the narrow space caught his pack on both sides, he would back out and look for a wider opening. This sometimes delayed the animal, and his eagerness to keep in sound of the bell mare would often drive him almost wild. Going around the point of a rock, if the pack struck the rock on one side, the mule would lean over, back out and try it again. This he would repeat until he cleared his pack, then go on. In the thickest of the forest, where the trees stood very close together, the mules became thoroughly tangled, and it required the greatest skill of the packers to straighten them out. The shavetails whinnied and thrashed around through the underbrush as if they were almost mad, and when released, would go on a run down the mountain side. Apparently their aim was to keep within sound of the bell on the bell mare. When this was lost they were like a ship at sea without a rudder. Fortunately the hunters reached the foot of the mountain ahead of the mules, and had the opportunity of witnessing the skillful way in which each mule dodged the trees and the rocks to clear his pack, and when the bottom was reached, they all started on a stampede to find the bell mare.

\* \* \*

#### **WILD BUFFALO IN A CATTLE PEN.**

When F. M. Phillips had "cut out " all of his H brand of cattle from the main round-up on Fish creek, twenty miles above the mouth of the Chug-

water, and was driving them home to his ranch, he discovered a wild buffalo bull in his herd. It was not an unusual thing back in the '70's for the cowboys in rounding up cattle to find a stray buffalo among the cattle. The only attention paid to this was when the owner had "cut out" his brand to drive back on his own range, or take them home to "cut out the beef" for shipment. With whichever herd the stray buffalo happened to follow, it was driven along with the cattle, and found its way to the branding pen or in with the "beef." Phillips' corral was enclosed with logs on three sides, an almost precipitous wall of rock fifty or more feet high forming the fourth side of the corral, and it was so steep that cattle could not climb out—one would imagine that even a mountain sheep could not scale the wall. Imagine, then, Mr. Phillips' surprise in looking out of his window one morning to see this wild buffalo bull almost to the top of this wall of rock, and in a short time it got to the top and scampered away over the open plains.

\* \* \*

### "JANE."

The many inquiries, "What became of Jane?" the buxom Irish woman who came to Thomas Prowse's train at Kearney, referred to in the first chapter of this book, lead me to believe that the following sentence was overlooked: "When the train reached Virginia City, its destination, it was disbanded, every one going his own way."

A few days after our arrival at Virginia City, I met Jane on Wallace street, and in reply to my in-

quiry,—“Have you found a gold mine yet?”, she said: “Lord bless you, darlin’, I worked a week in the Virginia Hotel and got \$35.00. Then I went to washing and I’ve got \$75.00 in gold dusht in me buckskin bag,—’sure Mike’,—and how is it wid ye?”

Jane “struck it rich” when she invested in a wash-board and tub. The last I saw of her, four weeks after our arrival at Virginia City, she was working like a beaver and had then saved \$150.00 in “dusht.”

\* \* \*

#### **SIDE LIGHTS ON A GOLD MINING CAMP.**

Only general reference has been made to the curious population of Virginia City, Montana, in the year 1864. While “hanging bees,” and banishing the desperadoes was going on, the moral atmosphere of Virginia City was improving each day. Aside from this class there were others, for Alder Gulch was known to be the richest and most extensive placer diggings ever discovered, and it attracted people of every calling in life from all over the country. Within a year from its discovery it contained 6,000 people, and its greatest peculiarity was that among the number not two dozen women were in the town. There were a few heroic wives who had borne the hardships of an overland trip, with their husbands; aside from these, the remainder, about a dozen were adventuresses who gloried in such euphonious names, as “The Memphis Iron Clad,” “The Dancing Idiot,” “Orum’s Pet,” “Irish Ann,” “Nelly the Bilk,” “Zulu Twins,” “Salt Lake Kate,” etc. There were also a few of the younger set of that ilk

that were the principal attractions at the dance halls. Occasionally a leader of the above named majority of women, accompanied by one or two of the same set, would take it into her head to fill up to the brim on champagne, at \$10.00 per bottle, and go forth at midnight dressed in her best attire, wearing diamonds galore to "clean out the dance halls." Of course this would always end in a ruction in which everybody in the room would take a hand. The number of broken heads and black eyes seen on the street next day, could be counted in bunches. There were too many to single out. Some of the upper ten of this class of women had respectable balances to their credit in the two banks. I was buying gold dust in the bank of Nowlan & Weary, and this was one of the first places to get the news of the proceedings of the night before. Their supply of gold dust gone, diamonds lost, their faces swollen, their tempers ruffled, their burdens must be told to some.

Con Orum, a blacksmith from Denver, Colorado, and the only professional prize fighter in the town at the time referred to, kept a saloon on a principal side street. Later came Paddy Ryan and Patsey Marley, then Hugh O'Neill, who, as before stated, was one of Wells Fargo's men. Each one of these celebrities had his friends and backers, and a prize fight was arranged between Con Orum and Patsey Marley, to come off in an unfinished log enclosure with no covering overhead, on the west side of Wallace street, below Castner's hotel, some time early in January, 1866, with the mercury twenty-five degrees below zero. Ninety-seven rounds were



fought to an overflowing house of as rough and motley a set of human beings as ever assembled, at what is called a "prize ring."

Omaha's robust late distinguished citizen, Count John A. Creighton, was one of the witnesses to the affair. There are a few others now living in Omaha who were present as well as myself. Amusements in those days were bull fights, bull and bear fights, dog fights and every kind of a fight that material could be had for. A fight between a Mexican bull and a grizzly bear was one of them. I recall the time when citizens of that day and in that place could stand some pretty hard things, but this occasion was beyond the limit and not a few citizens, who did not care to mix in the motley audience were invited by Mr. Creighton to go on the roof of his wholesale grocery store, that overlooked the ring to witness the affair.

Paddy Ryan who was a "second" in the prize fight, was the same Ryan who led the bread and flour riot in Virginia City, when a sack of flour of ninety-eight pounds had reached the price of \$130.00 in gold dust. The allotted price being one ounce per sack, when flour enough to make a biscuit cost half a dollar, the miners would not stand for it.

Ryan, with an empty flour sack suspended from the top of a pole he carried, led a mob into every store, cellar, dugout, and residence, followed by teams, and made the owners of flour divide. The merchants had concealed their flour in every conceivable place, even under the beds of the miner's cabins, in holes in the ground, feeling sure that the

great rise in the price of the staff of life, would be met with great opposition and much trouble.

If a merchant had one hundred bags in his store, the levy was not much less than fifty bags. If a private dwelling had twenty bags hidden under its beds, the tribute was ten of them, and so the mob ransacked the town and took the surplus, and in less than twenty-four hours the regular price of a bag of flour went down from \$130.00 to \$45.00.

Professor Dimsdale who was at that time editing the only newspaper published in the gold camp, "The Montana Post," I think, was there and in his serial notes, afterwards compiled in book form as "The Vigilants of Montana," makes a somewhat meager mention of these conspicuous events. They would now seem to be no more than manufactured stories, but in those strenuous days, it was best to be circumspect and avoid the fate the toughs, who were later hung or banished, would mete out to too much meddling. No doubt there are many men living, who think the editing of a newspaper sometimes is attended with danger. Compare notes with this man Dimsdale and he will be praised for the courage of even brief mention.

Some time after the Orum-Marley prize fight, Hugh O'Neill, came up to Virginia City and slyfoxed around some months and finally brought about a fight between himself and Con Orum. O'Neill was a head taller and many pounds heavier than Orum, and the match was counted uneven for weight and size. Their fight took place in the "Theatre building" over on a side street. Ben. H. Barrows, who was in Virginia City at that time, and is now

the collector of customs and in charge of the Omaha postoffice building, will bear me out in the statement that one hundred and twenty-seven rounds were fought. Of all sights and scenes attending a prize fight, I doubt if this has ever been equalled. The crowd was the sight of a life time; the order maintained has never been excelled. While the men were unevenly matched in weight and size, their pluck and staying qualities were evenly balanced. The outcome, although a "drawn battle," is of little consequence, for it was evidently "fixed." The oddity of the affair was the part the women named herein took in it. Some half dozen on each side of the "ropes." At the end of each round, they fairly deluged their favorites with perfumery that was used as lavishly as water and cost \$10.00, a bottle. As for the betting, the entire audience would not compare with the planking down by the women of from ten to a hundred ounces of gold dust on their man, and there was little difference in the number of women in each corner besides the ropes, all of them as loud and hilarious of manner as the very toughest of the men.

\* \* \*

#### **A MINERS' BREAD RIOT.**

On my reaching Silver Bow to open a store (with one wagon load of goods) there were only two buildings in the town, one a store operated by a Mr. Dorwin, a man of sixty years, who had married a school teacher from Iowa of thirty years and she kept house in the rear of his log store. The only cast iron cook stove within a range of eighty miles—

which the miners had repeatedly offered \$300 for, was owned by Mrs. Dorwin. I started an opposition store in a pretentious two-story log building. Within a range of five miles below and five miles above and in the small side gulches, were perhaps seventy-five miners' cabins containing a population of two hundred and fifty people, all men and about one hundred of these came to town to trade, usually on Sunday. Flour was selling at \$50 per bag of ninety-eight pounds and Dorwin tried at once to induce me to raise the price to \$75, as snow on the main range would prevent teams from bringing flour over the divide until the next June, unless it came by pack train, four months hence; but this I refused to do. All the flour I had was twenty bags that cost me \$25.00 per sack in Virginia City, and the hauling in dead of winter near a hundred miles and a profit of ten per cent was all it would bear. Sunday Mr. Dorwin was waited on by two wagon loads of miners. They quietly loaded on the two two-horse wagons all the flour, beans, rice and crackers the horses could haul, paying him about twenty-five per cent of his price on the goods taken and drove away. These provisions they distributed among the miners at cost, informing Mr. Dorwin that at a second attempt to raise the price of the "staff of life" he might be found at the end of an inch rope just on the edge of town. The effect which this episode had on my own business was to increase my trade, which continued until July, when I disposed of my stock and started for Helena to arrange for my trip of two thousand miles in an open boat down the Missouri river to Omaha.

**LIVELY STAGING IN THE WEST.**

On one of my staging trips to Salt Lake City, west of old Fort Bridger, being in haste to get through I was transferred from a Concord wagon to a lumber wagon carrying only the mail and express matter. This filled the wagon and I climbed on top of the mail sacks lying flat and holding on as best I could. The night was pitch dark and if the four horses had not been white I doubt if the driver could have seen where the reins held in his hands led to. A dare-devil young fellow called "Spense" was the driver. Whether he was familiar with the crooked and rocky road and the bridges made of poles crossing the stream every 200 yards, or depended on the horses' knowing the way, I could not tell. He raced them down the canyon on a full gallop, perhaps for my benefit. I hung on to the mail bags. They slipped and slid around and I was in constant danger of sliding off. If this had happened, I doubt it Spense would have known it until reaching the next station, for he was very busy driving and yelling at the horses. We drove into the swing station after fifteen miles at a terrific speed and here I laid over to wait for the first coach, which came two days later. There being a vacant seat I continued my journey.

For many years I carried it in my mind to "even up" with Spense, if I ever found him in the canyons, about Omaha or anywhere else off his own beat. This is the sequel:

Many years after this wild, midnight ride, when I became post trader at Fort Laramie, the Patrick

brothers ran a stage line from Cheyenne to the Black Hills by the way of Fort Laramie. It was in the palmy days of "road agents" and "hold ups." There came a new driver on the line and he was put on from Fort Laramie north. I had occasion to ask his name before he had made many trips. To my great surprise, it proved to be "Spense," the crazy driver who took me down Echo canyon years before. Here was a morsel of satisfaction to me and I soon began planning to even up with Spense, for he was the tenderfoot now. I began planning with the stage employes to have him taken over on Deer creek on a "snipe hunt" by night and lost in the woods. When the plan was fairly under way Spense drove in from the north one forenoon for the mail. He was rattled and nervous and wanted to quit his job then and there. I happened to be standing in the front door and he told the following story, the slangy expressions he used were more expressive than even the simplified spelling of to-day. He said:

"I had a jolt last night. I doubled out from Lance creek to the first 'red hold-up holler.' Two men jumped for the leaders, fired a couple of shots and told me to stop. One was a little slim cuss, the other a fat red-headed rooster. They told me as perlite as a school marm, 'if I moved an inch they'd drop me off the box full o' holes.' So I obeyed orders. Two other fellows told the passengers to get out, throw down their guns and hold up their hands. They made me throw the mail sacks out. The treasury box was built in the hind seat of the coach and they appeared to know the com-

pany's grain wagon was a little ways back and there was not much time to finish their job. After they got the guns and all the money and jewelry from the passengers they got into their saddles and told me to 'hit up the trail hard and not look back.' I threw the silk into the leaders and there didn't any grass grow under their feet into Rawhide station."

Not two weeks after the hold-up, the stage going up contained the "fat red-headed rooster" and "the little slim cuss" in irons, in charge of deputy marshals going towards Deadwood. It was late in the evening when they took supper at the Rustic hotel. One of my employes, Dan Fitzgerald, was a passenger and got off there. With the usual change of horses the stage with four passengers drove on. At the Platte ford, two miles away, the stage was delayed at the crossing. The next day was Sunday. All the cavalry was out in that direction, exercising their horses. Along the trail just under a bluff one company halted and the sergeant sent an orderly back to report to Colonel A. W. Evans, in command. "Two men hung at the Platte ford."

With my grey bronchos Colonel Evans and myself drove over to the place designated and we found the "little slim cuss" tied hands and feet hanging to a cottonwood limb, dead, the "red headed rooster" lying on the ground at his feet, he having been hung then cut down to make room for hanging the "little slim cuss." Being shy of halter rope only one could be hung at a time.

It was soon noised around the garrison that a party had met the coach, taken the two road agents out and told the driver to "move on." No further

particulars could be obtained. The "hold up of Spense" and the robbing of his passengers had been avenged.

\* \* \*

### GUARDING A PRISONER.

When I sold goods in Silver Bow one "jerky" stage with two horses carried passengers and the mail from Johnnie Grant's ranch on the Deer Lodge, up to Silver Bow, thence over the Pipe Stone range, which was the main Rocky Mountain divide, to Virginia City. The waters on the west side of the low narrow ridge run into the Deer Lodge, through Pend Oreille, Hell Gate and Bitter Root into the Columbia river and the Pacific ocean. Within a stone's throw a spring headed the waters flowing to the Jefferson, one of the three forks of the Missouri river and into the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic ocean.

To replenish my stock of goods, it was necessary for me to go to Virginia City occasionally. The stage went once a week and passed through Silver Bow going west in the afternoon returning at once, and arriving at Silver Bow going east again about two a. m. It was necessary to engage passage as the stage went west to be sure of a seat in the coach going east soon after midnight. At two a. m. I was called out to take the stage. My only baggage was a hundred ounces of Silver Bow gold dust, worth in trade \$13 an ounce. I climbed into the coach and found two fellow passengers.



"Get on the back seat with me, Collins," was my greeting from a Doctor Day, who was either a United States or a county marshal, and whose voice I recognized. We had rolled along some four miles, to the foot of the divide, when I felt a frequent nudging and I was not long in understanding the meaning of the maneuvers. The doctor handed me a Colt's revolver and said:

"Mr. Collins, I depend on you as my assistant. This man is my prisoner from Fort Owen and I depend on you to assist in guarding him."

There I was, inside a coach, curtains all buttoned down, with a marshal who had a "road agent" in irons, both feet and arms shackled and I was expected to assist in seeing that he would be safely delivered into the hands of the vigilantes in Virginia City, perhaps to be hung within an hour of his arrival.

Our duty was performed, and in half an hour after our arrival in Virginia City the prisoner was hanged.

\* \* \*

### **A NEZ PERCES SQUAW.**

In my somewhat varied life of travel my business west of the Missouri river carried me among over forty thousand Indians of the various tribes during fourteen or fifteen years and I had an opportunity of seeing as much of their mode of living, occupation, dress and habits as many of the early trappers and traders who had lived among them years before.

"Indian beauty" is one of the things looked for by all people who travel among Indians. As for myself, I saw one solitary squaw who could be called a beauty. She belonged to the Nez Perces tribe, which a long while before began its deviltry among the whites with Chief Joseph at its head. In time he gathered his entire band from out in Oregon and began a raid through the settlements east of Hell Gate, Bitter Root, Deer Lodge and through Montana, crossing the Missouri above old Fort Peck and was, with his entire band, captured by United States troops just before reaching the British possessions. The whole tribe was sent down into the Everglades of Florida to remain prisoners until they learned more of the peaceable ways of the whites.

It was many years before this, when I began storekeeping with one wagon load of goods in Silver Bow, that a dozen lodges of the Nez Perces camped on Brown creek, two miles north of Silver Bow, to trap beaver and otter. They were well fitted out with a band of about a hundred ponies of a mixed breed called "piebald," "pinto" and "calico," red woolen blankets, fair leathern saddles, etc., and were better equipped than any small band I ever met. They also had gold coin in \$5, \$10 and \$20 pieces.

The band came to my store, two miles from their camp, to trade, paying cash for all their purchases. They were middle-aged or young men and women. The first that came to the store was a baker's dozen of as decent an appearing lot of the "copper colored" as I have ever seen. There was a tall, well propor-

tioned, sleek-haired young fellow who acted as interpreter. He told me he did not belong to the tribe. His grandfather was one of the Hudson Bay company's French voyagers and he came from the French half-breeds at Fort Berthold with a train of ox carts, fell in with a war party of Lacotas and drifted over among the Pend Oreille Indians, and when with his little band in camp on Brown creek, he saw a pretty squaw, he had rounded up his herd of twenty ponies and had come along with the band "to get her."

Occasionally this pretty young woman would come to my store without him and with four or five women. She was the only one among them who could by signs make me understand their wants. She was of medium size, not stout, with but a slight tinge of copper in her complexion, a clear, chiseled face with eyes like diamonds, lips clean cut, a pretty mouth, and teeth so white and perfect that a white beauty of any "four-hundred" might envy them; her hair was fine, soft and glossy and fell in loose waves over her shoulders; her ears thin and almost transparent; she wore no other ornaments than a string of large blue beads around her neck and a coil of German silver around one wrist. She was dressed in a striped calico skirt, black broadcloth leggings embroidered in silk, deer-skin shirt and moccasins, a bright plaid shawl over her shoulders and her *tout en semble* was topped off with a wide-brimmed, mouse-colored soft hat with a string under her chin to hold it in place on the back of her head. She rode a handsome little bay mare and when mounted astride hers was a picturesque figure. But riding

was not her proper stunt and did not show her charms to the best advantage.

One moonlight night, after midnight, the half-breed awakened me and said this girl was sick and he came for a bottle of "Red Jacket bitters." I got out of my bunk, gave him the bitters and he said, "she pay" and rode off.

In a few days another bunch came to the store and brought me a string of trout and the young girl accompanying them, did not offer to liquidate for the bitters, but handed me a smoked buckskin gold dust bag, nicely embroidered in colored silk.

This bag I have retained all these years, and now it holds some small nuggets and specimens of gold I picked up in various mining camps.

\* \* \*

### **SIXTY THOUSAND DRESSED BUFFALO HIDES.**

After arranging for the driving of the herd of mules to Carbon on the Union Pacific railroad, which the Indians took possession of soon after their arrival, I took the Wells, Fargo company's stage for Salt Lake City to make inquiry for several loads of saddlery goods started from Omaha by team overland late in the summer previous and snowed in in the mountains east of Salt Lake City, where they remained until early spring. When the spring thaw came the owner of the train, to whom I paid \$25.00 per thousand pounds freight, finally brought his train into Salt Lake with the merchandise in good order. I sold out the entire lot to Eldridge, Clawson & Company of the Zion co-operative store, and re-

turned to Helena by stage where I again spent some time waiting for the arrival of the first steamboat from St. Louis, that would leave Fort Benton for down river after unloading its cargo and try to make a second trip up the Missouri the same season. The first boat to arrive and unload was the big stern-wheeler, "Cora." I went by team from Helena to Fort Benton and embarked for Omaha. While these commonplace events may not thus far interest the reader it is necessary to relate them in order to bring forward the following facts.

There was little or no freight going down the river except dressed buffalo hides, worth at wholesale \$2.50 each, packed in bales of ten. The Cora took on board all that were ready for shipment and started immediately on the down trip. Both the cabin and deck carried a full quota of returning miners, every one of them with gold dust in buckskin bags. Half an hour after leaving Fort Benton the bell announced that dinner was ready. The cabin on each side of the table was lined with the rough and burly miners, (at least double in number what the boat registered to carry) who, by occupying a chair would be sure of a seat at the first table, so they stood holding on to it until the second bell would ring. To understand the determination of these passengers to be first at the table, a stranger needed but to try to edge in and get in advance of one of these men. All of the passengers wore revolvers strapped to their waists and the sight of these articles was enough to show that they were carried for a purpose. As soon as the table cloth was spread the miners gradually edged up towards

it and before dinner was announced, every chair along the wall of the cabin was occupied. When dinner was ready the occupant of each chair pushed it up in front of a plate and stood by with his revolver and his belt of cartridges convenient. Not more than one-fourth of the passengers could be seated at one table. When they finished, a second table was set and the same process of getting possession of a chair was gone through with again. It required four separate tables at each meal to serve the cabin passengers. Setting twelve tables a day took from four o'clock in the morning until ten o'clock at night. The cabin was actually overrun. Every passenger not having a berth had a bundle of bedding which was thrown on deck outside of the cabin along the guards.

Passengers fortunate enough to have secured berths, (each berth containing two single bunks) were not allowed to occupy them alone. Six people would be the allotment and they were occupied six hours by each occupant, in relays. The table was very poorly supplied and by the time the boat had reached a trading post below Milk river provisions began to run very low. At an Indian agency I bought a bag full of dried buffalo tongues and for the following ten days the supply of provisions was bread and crackers, beans and rice, coffee and buffalo tongue. When ten o'clock at night came, the miners placed all the chairs out on the guards and bunked down on the floor and from the bow to the stern of the cabin, there was not a foot of space unoccupied. The most difficult task for the miners was to secrete the bags of dust they carried on their

persons and all lay down not only with their clothes on, but with their revolvers and cartridges also. We were twenty days making the voyage.

At all the trading posts along the river, bales of buffalo robes were taken on board. The largest number being from Fort Union, at the mouth of the Yellowstone; Fort Berthold and old Fort Peck. When the cargo was all on I asked the clerk how many bales he had on board. After carefully calculating the lots from each landing he handed me the manifest. The "Cora" carried sixty thousand robes, almost equaling in weight its entire tonnage. At Yankton and at Sioux City the largest part of the cargo was unloaded, the balance going to St. Louis.

\* \* \*

### **WEIGHING A GRIZZLY BEAR.**

"Cap, I want you to weigh a bear." These words were said to me by a grizzled, weather-worn, ragged, old hunter with so much hair on his face and neck he might have passed for the wild man of the woods. His head was bandaged in rags, one arm cut out of his coat sleeve and if I ever saw a white man who looked the picture of distress he was the man. A crowd at once gathered around his wagon and it was easy to get men to "lend a hand" and drag the big bear to the scales inside the store. Thirteen hundred and sixty-five pounds was the actual weight. When the bear was loaded back into the wagon with bison, elk, moose and deer, the disfigured hunter told the following story:

"It was this way. You see, Cap, Dan and me (Dan is my pardner, see?) were camped over in the Gallatin valley hunting for market, see? The cussed varmints were so bad we built a corral of fallen pine logs to store our game in until we had a full load for market. The next day we were going to "pull our freight" for Virginia City and top out the load with black tail deer that we could kill anywhere on the road in any quantity. I was coming to the corral from the west leading my horse with a young mountain lion behind the saddle, when this here big brute made a pass at jumping out of the corral where he had been feeding on our game. Hearing my partner coming from the east it was trying to escape not having seen or heard me. Then it turned and ran back and Dan and the brute came together. By the time I could run around the fence they were mixed, tearing through the underbrush. When the bear left Dan it came for me and with one paw raked me down from head to waist and before it could get its mouth on me Dan's 45 bullet broke his neck. It was a close shave for me. I had about an even chance of being killed by the shot or chawed up by the bear. The next morning we loaded up for town. That was three days ago."





## LAKES *and* WOODS of WISCONSIN

In the spring of 1895, with Charles Turner of Omaha, I visited the lakes and woods of Wisconsin. Mr. Turner had been a woodsman in early life,—being a surveyor by profession,—and the part of Wisconsin which we visited was his old stamping ground. He told me that as I was not familiar with the timber country, there would be something new and interesting in the trip,—very different from plains and mountain life,—and, as we shall see, his predictions were true.

J. B. Mann was the proprietor of a fishing lodge on lower Trout lake, in the region known as “Tomahawk Group” in the Wisconsin woods. Before reaching the town of Tomahawk, not far from Minneacqua, we came to a logging camp. At the station a burly lot of Finlanders got aboard the train. These men had been in the woods all winter engaged in logging and had just received their pay, and were on their way to Tomahawk to spend their earnings. “Bootleggers” and vendors of cheap liquor had located near the logging station and all of the Finns were more or less under the influence of liquor. The conductor had a disagreeable time getting the men loaded on the cars. They staggered into the train and down the isles as only drunken men could do, dropping into seats and sprawling about. They were dressed in the clothing of all lumbermen—suits of striped kersey blanket cloth, heavy cowhide shoes, the soles filled with spikes

half an inch long. The crowd was a little too rough for the other passengers, who, with Mr. Turner and myself, went into the baggage car.

A few hours brought us to Tomahawk station where all the Finns got off.

About the station and in the town the big trees had been cut down, the stumps still standing and the buildings were of unplanned boards running up and down and battened. Some outside walls were shingled but there was no paint on any building,—the latter omission being of little consequence, however, as the Finns immediately started in to “paint the town.”

At the station before reaching Tomahawk the operator had told the conductor to look out for a forest fire that might cross the track. We were not long in running into the clouds of smoke and floating embers. Ahead of us was a narrow streak of light where a strip of the timber had been cut through and on a clear day one could see miles ahead. The trees cut by the railroad along the right-of-way were piled up as cord wood near the track fully ten feet high and three or four hundred feet long and near enough to the track to be handed to the fireman on the tender. After we left the station and reached the smoke from the fire, the train came to a stop, the crew climbed out and met the conductor, and the passengers were then called in consultation to size up the situation. The engineer said: “If the ties ahead of us are not burning I do not think the rails are hot enough to warp and we can make it if we can ‘take a run at it.’ There is not water enough in the tank to carry us to the next

station back and we have **got** to make it, or lay up and send back for water, and by that time the rails will be hot and warped and we can't go ahead. We must decide quickly what we will do."

It was decided to run slowly through the smoke until we reached the fire, and then be governed by circumstances. The conductor cried "All aboard" and we started.

We soon reached the burning trees and piles of wood which were on fire on both sides of the track,—a mass of flames and red coals. The ties were all right as far as could be seen. "Shall we try it?" asked the engineer, consulting the passengers. It was decided we should, and all the car windows and doors were tightly closed. With a prolonged whistle we backed down a half mile; another long whistle and we started ahead. The puffing of the engine was slow at first, then faster and faster. We were running through a blaze of flames all about us. Faster and faster the train flew. The heat came through the glass windows so that we were compelled to huddle in the aisles. There appeared a streak of fire on both sides of the car and the smoke coming through the cracks of the doors and windows nearly stifled us. Five minutes of this and we should be lying in the aisles suffocated. The engineer could not see the smoke stack.

Our speed was terrific—a mile a minute and even faster. "Will we make it?" asked the passengers. The answer came: "We will die in our tracks if we do not."

Presently there came a long shrill whistle,—a signal that we were out of the woods and safe.

The train stopped and all hands got out, took a long breath, and looked to see what damage had been done to the cars. "God, it was hot," said the engineer as he almost fell out of the engine cab. Look at the blisters on the coaches," said the conductor; "but we are all right. All aboard," and in a few minutes we were at Minoqua, the last station on the line.

I reminded Mr. Turner that he had told me I would see some new things on the trip and asked if he counted this as one of them. "Yes," he answered, "the Finns was one and this is number two, and we are not yet at the fishing grounds."

The next morning a spring wagon took us to Mann's lodge, over a new road where the trees had recently been cut to open a new trail. Mann's lodge is a log cabin, with partitions of rough-sawed, unplaned boards, with its porches housed in with wire netting, for mosquitos were there by the million. Fully twenty-five fishermen had arrived ahead of us and were preparing their tackle for the next morning. Half a dozen Chippewa Indians were on hand to act as guides, at from \$3.00 to \$3.50 per day, the use of a birch bark canoe being 50 cents extra, and a clinker-built boat was \$1.00 extra.

We engaged a six-foot, two hundred pound, raw-boned "Kanuck" and an Indian named John Catfish to row our boats, carry packs and make portages. A Chippewa Indian will carry a pack of one hundred pounds on his back, and on his head and shoulders above this he will add a birch bark canoe, carrying the load one or two miles without resting,

and at a pace that will worry an ordinary white man to keep up with.

In much of the timbered country in Wisconsin there is more water than land,—lakes and swamps where horses cannot travel, with but few trails and roads. The Indians traveling through this country carry their birch bark canoes, blankets and provisions over portages leading from one lake to another on their route. It is a time-honored custom to leave a tin can or plate with pitch gathered from the Norway pine trees and mixed with charcoal to repair leaks in the canoes at a portage. When a leak has to be mended a fire is built and by the aid of a lighted torch a flame is blown into the pitch until it is melted and then poured onto the damaged boat until the break it covered. When the pitch is cold the work is ended. If it is a puncture a piece of cloth is laid on covering the hole and the hot pitch is then applied. To resume the journey the boatman lashes the paddle from one cross-piece to another and a stick of the same length is made fast to the cross piece also, forming a yoke. The canoe is turned bottom up, the boatman walks under and it is balanced upon his shoulders.

Our first day's excursion was in the nature of a prospecting trip to upper Trout lake. When our party was nearing the head of the lake Mr. Turner said: "Pull over to the point where the hemlock tree stands," and as we landed on the beach, Mr. Turner continued: "When I surveyed in this country forty years ago carrying my tripod, compass and what little provisions and blankets I could add, I camped alone under this tree. Then it was about

four inches in diameter ; now it will measure nearly twenty."

We made a fire under the hemlock and took lunch.

I wish it were possible to describe the joy and real satisfaction that this event gave Mr. Turner. Grown men often remember some particular spot where, in their younger days, some of their pleasantest moments were spent, and nothing gives them more pleasure than to visit that spot at some later day in their lives. This point was Mr. Turner's haven. Loitering here a few hours and drifting leisurely back to camp we reached the lodge about dark with a dozen or more lake trout, weighing from two to four pounds each. All the fishermen had come in before us and the most exuberant and breezy of the lot was a Mr. Lawrence of the Grand Pacific hotel, Chicago, who visited Mann's lodge every spring during fishing season. He seemed more interested in the catches of the others than he did in his own success, and he was generally the first man on the beach to meet an incoming party and ascertain its catch.

Mr. Turner knew something of the possibilities of the lakes of the region around us, and after consulting Mr. Mann and John Catfish we decided on an early start next morning for Sand lake, six miles north.

At daylight we loaded our camp outfits into two bark canoes, (Mr. Turner with a big, strong Canadian woodsman for his boatman and I with the Indian, John Catfish. From the landing at the head of the lake there was a portage of three miles to Sand lake through the timber. Mr. Catfish's atten-

tion seemed to be drawn to a distant cloud of smoke in the south, evidently from a forest fire, and we asked him if it were possible that the fire could cross our trail before we returned to the lodge. "Maybe so; wind change, come sure in two days; no wind no change, fire no come dis way," replied the Indian. After a light lunch the boatmen lashed their paddles to the canoes, then, with blankets and provisions for the whole party lashed to their backs, they turned the canoes bottom side up, walked to their center, balanced them on their shoulders, and started off on the trail. Mr. Turner and myself, carrying only our rods, found it difficult to keep up with their fast gait, although each boatman carried about one hundred and twenty-five pounds. Only three times the boatmen stopped to rest one end of the canoe on a leaning tree or backed up against a fallen log for six minutes, and then they were off again. Whenever we passed through the open timber Catfish kept his eye out for the cloud of smoke in the south,—to me it seemed at least ten miles away.

We passed through a clearing where underbrush grew. The wintergreen berries were red, the blueberries were just coming out in blossom, and that princely and sweetest scented of all wild flowers of the woods, the trailing arbutus, peeped out from the edge of snow banks left from the winter—not yet quite gone.

It was afternoon when we reached the lake, and, after unloading their packs, the guides cut jack pine trees and made a slanting shelter, gathered pine boughs to lay under our blankets, built a fire and

cooked a lunch of coffee, bacon and potatoes, and we were ready for the lake.

"Collins, you and Catfish go over to the north, and we will go the other way. I think the channel's good for muskallonge over there," said Mr. Turner, and he pushed off from the shore. He had not been gone ten minutes before he hooked a muskallonge and our canoe was beating back and across the inlet. A dash was made at my big skinner spoon and the water swirled as if a big boulder had been dropped near the boat. "Big Muskie," said Catfish, "we go back, he come again." Putting the canoe about, the Indian paddled back over our track and near the spot another dash was made at my bait, and this time with the hook set well in its mouth the fish jumped its full length out of the lake, then made a dash for deep water.

"Hold tight line; I take you place not so deep," said my boatman. I followed his suggestion all right, but when the canoe was turned towards the shore the fish made a straight dash for it, making another leap clear out of the water and it was pretty lively work to take in the slack of the line hand over hand to keep up with its pace as it came right at us. Ninety feet of line were out when it ran under the boat. In this rush the reel was too slow.

Catfish was a star hand with the paddle. The skillful manner in which he handled the canoe, always giving me its broadside toward the fish, showed that he was an expert boatman. The fish again started toward the boat and again I pulled in the slack, hand over hand. As it came within six feet of the boat Catfish reached for it with the gaff



hook, but missed. Then it turned its head on one side and scudded away like a driving horse pulling on one line. The Indian actually had it towing the canoe. "Forty-pound muskie," said Catfish. But I was too busy to make an estimate of its length or weight, for it was gradually getting up greater speed, and following it closely, I took in the line, and when we drew alongside, the guide sank the gaff hook into its side and lifted the fish into the canoe where its floundering nearly upset the frail craft. Catfish put his moccasined foot on the handle of the gaff hook and held the fish down, then, with two or three hard raps over the head with a club, it trembled a moment and then lay still, dead.

Meanwhile, Mr. Turner had seen us cavorting about and came over to watch our fun. He had caught three or four muskallonge weighing eight, nine and sixteen pounds, but I had the prize fish.

We all went ashore, gathered some moss from the north side of the trees in a tamarack swamp, and laid our fish on some ice we found under the moss, which can often be found that early in the spring at the foot of trees.

The big "muskie" weighed twenty-six pounds and measured forty-four inches long. After lunch we started out again, catching as many fish as we could possibly eat and carry back over the portage to the lodge, returning early to camp and at dusk turned in on our beds of pine boughs.

Next morning the guides were up at daylight preparing breakfast. After watching the smoke from the fire in the woods, Catfish returned to camp and

said: "No fishing more; wind change and fire will cross our trail; must go quick."

The camp was gotten together quickly, and, with the fish divided into two packs, and the canoes, with all our camp outfit, on the shoulders of the boatmen, we started over the back trail. Before we reached the clearing the fire had crept along the tamarack swamp on our left, and the wind had drifted the smoke across our trail and the brush was already burning within one hundred yards of us. The south wind blew it directly across our trail and the opening was not a quarter of a mile across. The smoke was so dense that we were obliged to get down on our hands and knees and crawl through it. We succeeded in reaching the landing safely, not knowing, however, what had become of our guides with their heavy loads. But they came in a few minutes behind us.

We ate a lunch at the landing on Trout lake, loaded our packs into the boats and started for the lodge. All the load was put in Catfish's canoe, and Mr. Turner, myself and the other boatman got into the other boat. The wind blew a stiff gale from the south. Catfish started for the other shore to get into still water. Our boat was going through white-capped waves, and as we rounded a point and looked back we saw Catfish quietly paddling along in still water, smoking his pipe, a mile behind us.

It was toward evening when we reached the lodge. The fishermen had all come in and stood upon the shore watching our arrival. Mr. Lawrence had caught forty odd muskallonge from the Manitowish river, weighing from two to eight pounds each. One

of the party had hooked near the boat landing a sixteen-pound trout. The others had fair catches of bass and other fish. But our big "muskie" tipped the beam at more pounds than any three taken by the other fishermen, and was in reality the largest caught that whole season.

After another day on the lakes with fair success we packed our traps and drove to the railroad station. When we reached the place of our wild ride through the burning timber, the fire had crossed the track and had drifted away to the north.

Upon our arrival at Omaha, the big muskallonge was sent to the Omaha club and served for a full dinner to all the club members.

The spring following we went to Gordon, Wisconsin, southwest of Duluth, Minnesota. Here we met the somewhat famous "Steve" Gheen. He had the reputation of being the best lumber camp foreman, and the best man in a log jam, and was an all around woodsman, earning \$5.00 a day, while the ordinary wages were from \$2.00 to \$3.00 per day. He was a quarter-blood Chippewa Indian, a clean-cut, dandy sort of a fellow, always gentlemanly, and there was not his match in handling a canoe or birling a log in that vicinity. We employed him as our boatman. The first day he carried a canoe to White Fish and other lakes, among them being Red lake, where, in one day, Mr. Turner and I caught ninety-four big-mouth bass, besides a lot of catfish and pickerel. The bass weighed from two to four pounds each.

We had made a short portage to a camp and when we counted our fish we found we had ninety-four,

it was suggested that we make another trip across the lake and make the amount a full hundred. In half an hour we were back to camp with sixteen more bass, making one hundred and ten bass in the day.

Out on a long point we found a loon's nest, half floating in the water. It was built of rushes and contained three eggs. I carried one of them to camp. The hen bird had watched me robbing its nest and kept up its wild call. It would visit its nest, then sail away over our camp. It kept up its mournful cry all night long as it hovered over the camp.



## **SAN FRANCISCO EARTHQUAKE AND FIRE**

All the public clocks in the city of San Francisco were stopped at 5:15 a. m. April 18, 1906, by the earthquake.

I was asleep on the ninth floor of the steel and stone apartment house, The Alexander, on Geary street, half a block from the St. Francis hotel. My first impression upon awakening was that I was in a railroad wreck. I had been thrown almost out of bed by the first shock and the second threw me back again. I sat up, but was again thrown back into the bed. Then I put my feet out and stood upon the floor and realized that I was in San Francisco and in an earthquake.

The building shook and trembled like a tree in a tornado while I staggered to a window where my clothes lay upon a chair. Two more shocks followed, not so violent as the others, and, as I looked from the window, I saw the building adjoining crash down. I learned afterward that twelve people had been buried beneath its walls. I saw puffs of smoke around the horizon and realized that a great conflagration was imminent. With satchel in hand I started down eight flights of stairs, not knowing what obstacle I might meet to cut me off and leave me beyond all possibility of escape. But the only impediment I encountered was falling plaster, and the farther down I went the more the plaster had

fallen. It was my determination to get out of the building if possible and over onto Union square, where the Dewey monument stood, where I would not be killed by falling roofs or walls. I reached the street and climbed over piles of stones which had fallen from the building adjoining and I saw that what had a few moments before been small puffs of smoke had increased to great clouds and at that early hour it seemed to me the city was doomed to destruction by fire. Live wires were dancing about and snapping like firecrackers, but the current of electricity was soon shut off. Water pipes had parted five miles out of the city and all power and light of every description was out of service.

I reached the park safely and at once resolved that no roof, unless it be a canvas tent, should again cover my head if I could get out of the city and over to Oakland across the bay. Scarcely fifty people had reached the park when I arrived there. The guests of the St. Francis were pouring out—men and women with a sheet or a blanket wrapped about them, women with a single gown, barefooted and with hair flying. I saw one young woman, maybe a bride of a few weeks, barefooted, her hair flying, clothed in an elegant party dress, her fingers covered with diamond rings.

When the men had brought the women and children into the park and had gotten courage to go back to their rooms and get their clothing, there was no one left there but the women and a few children. There were no hysterics, no crying or moaning among the women, only a look of resignation. They all seemed resigned to their fate,—what happens us

will happen them, what happens them will happen to us, and no one can prevent it. It was not long until people from the surrounding buildings began arriving. To get away from the crowd I moved over towards Post street, where I could watch the scene.

While I stood wondering how it would be possible for me to get away from all of these scenes of misery and horror and over to Oakland and away to the east, I heard a voice saying: "Mr. Collins, how would you like to be in Omaha today?". The speaker was Harry Cartan of Omaha.

The only road to the ferry house that I knew was down Market street. By this time dozens of blocks of buildings were in flames, cutting off that route completely and Mr. Cartan's voice seemed to solve the problem of some other way out of the burning city. For two hours we walked together about the streets, viewing the destruction and damage the earthquake had wrought. The sun in the east beyond the clouds of smoke and glare of the fire looked like a great lump of red hot iron. The heat seemed to have formed a draft straight up into the sky, a mile above. Sparks and cinders floated about in the sky until a current of air would carry them out over the bay. No new fires seemed to have been caused from floating cinders or sparks. The sky was a brilliant sight to behold.

To undertake a meagre description of all that fell under my eye would be a great tax on memory, and ability to describe it quite beyond me. We walked down to the Call building, the Palace hotel and over to the Chronicle building to the Postal Telegraph

office, to send telegrams. The office was jammed with people. The clerks overtaxed and so driven with work they had strength only to hold out their hands and take messages and the money. The question of their ever being able to even get the dispatches started on the wire was of minor consideration. From my experience I know many dispatches were sent by mail by the company.

We walked over to the banking district, where every business building was vacated, doors closed, and a watchman standing guard at the door. Piles of stone and brick—the fire had not reached that quarter—that the earthquake had thrown to the sidewalk, blockading them completely. With tottering walls on all sides it was only safe to walk in the middle of the street. In places whole blocks of buildings had sunken a foot or more below the street, paving and curbing were warped out of shape and left above the street level. Cracks in the street were everywhere, from the width of your hand to eighteen inches and more. A grotesque sight were the show windows of the great dry goods houses, where cloaks, handsome dresses and elegant bonnets were displayed on figures. These figures were tumbled about in all shapes, some standing on their heads, others fallen in heaps, bonnets, opera coats, lace dresses, all in confusion. We continued our walk to keep watch of the progress of the fire and every inch of the way the earthquake had left its destructive path. On all sides where standing walls were shaken and the sidewalks obstructed, the space was roped off to keep travel in the middle of the street and at times it was necessary to go entirely



around a block. We spent three hours in walking about the city, before the fire had reached as far as Third and Market streets, but at the right and the left of it it seemed like an unbroken blaze away to the bay.

All kinds of rumors were afloat: "The ferry building had gone down and boats could not land." "Chicago stood in nine feet of water." "New York had had a tidal wave," etc. These attracted little attention because of our own surroundings. We walked back to the St. Francis hotel and in the grill room got a cup of coffee and rolls and again went out on the street.

By this time the terror-stricken people filled every inch of space in the park. Geary, Powell and Post streets were thronged.

Now the military had arrived from the Presidio and the city was placed under martial law. Soldiers and policemen were stationed everywhere to protect private property and to guard the people against travel in dangerous places. Before 9 a. m. this famous proclamation of the mayor was issued:

#### PROCLAMATION BY THE MAYOR.

The Federal troops, the members of the regular police force and all special police officers have been authorized to kill any and all persons found engaged in looting or in the commission of any other crime.

I have directed all the Gas and Electric Lighting companies not to turn on gas or electricity until I order them to do so, you may therefore

expect the city to remain in darkness for an indefinite time.

I request all citizens to remain at home from darkness until daylight of every night until order is restored.

I warn all citizens of the danger of fire from damaged or destroyed chimneys, broken or leaking gas pipes or fixtures, or any like cause.

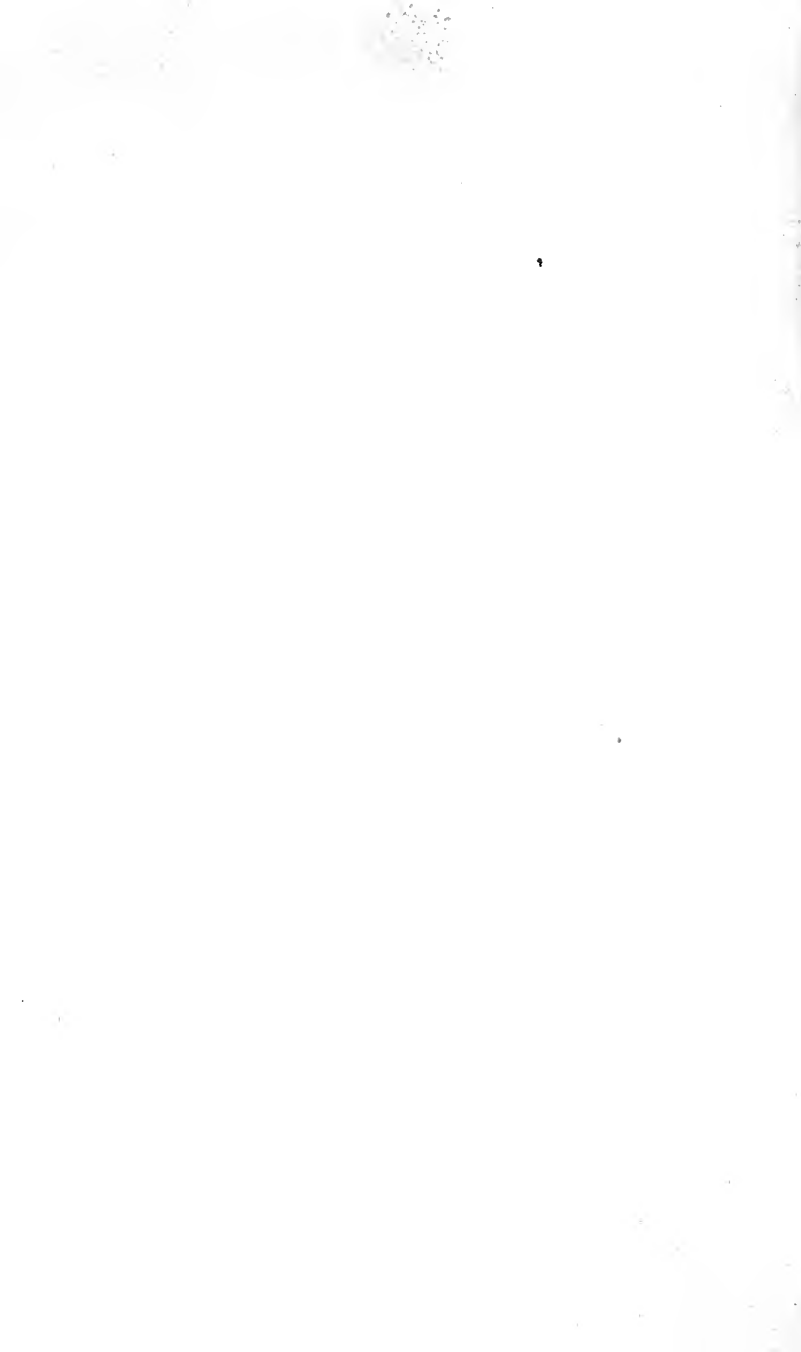
E. E. SCHMITZ, Mayor..

Altaver Print.      Mission and 22nd Streets.

The city water wagons began hauling water into Dewey park for drinking purposes. Loaves of bread and crackers were brought and given to all who asked for them. Dairy wagons loaded with milk cans arrived on Geary street and milk was given out freely. Down among the small saloons, liquor was sold so lavishly and drunkenness became so general that the saloons were ordered gutted and the liquors poured out on the streets. It was not an infrequent sound to hear the crack of a soldier's or policeman's rifle or pistol ending somebody's career at an attempt at some crime. In the great crowd Mr. Cartan and I became separated—an unfortunate circumstance for me, because I knew no easy way I could get out of the city on account of being a stranger, and among all the thousands of people I did not know where to look for an acquaintance whom I could reach. So I stood in places where I could see the fire blazing its way up Market street. From near Union square I watched the smoke pour out of the upper tier of windows of the Call building; then the next, the Palace hotel, and on down to the



The author's keys, which went through the San Francisco fire. (The keys were found by workmen in the debris of the hotel and returned to Mr. Collins several months after his arrival home.)



ground floor. By the time the smoke had reached the ground floor, the flames were coming out of these buildings. I watched them until the blaze came out of every window and opening in the buildings—a grand and awful sight. I saw the glare of light through the yet unbroken glass, fronting on Market street, of the Palace hotel. This was also a beautiful sight, soon followed by smoke and flames.

In all parts of the city automobiles were hurrying about, containing the governor, the mayor of the city, the commanding general and army and municipal officers. To check the flames dynamite was brought from the garrison. As each block of buildings caught fire on the corner a few stores away, a hundred or two pounds of dynamite were used to check the flames. Still the fire raged and two blocks away they would fire dynamite until finally buildings were blown up three blocks ahead of the flames to check the fire. All the streets were thronged with people. A fair example of what was transpiring all over the city could be seen in Union square where the Dewey monument stood. Men, women and children carrying baskets, bundles of clothing, satchels, blankets, children with bird cages in one hand carrying their dolls by the leg or arm and to these little tots it all seemed great fun. Parrots were perched on the shoulders of men, pet dogs carried by women, trunks of clothing with a rope at one end, scraping and rasping over the asphalt pavement. Young women carrying typewriters, young men carrying books and stationery and every conceivable thing was lugged along to a resting place until they could go no further. As the fire progressed great crowds

of people nearly wore their lives out carrying and dragging after them the only articles they could save from their homes, stores and offices, and hundreds would fall on the street through sheer exhaustion and in the end abandon their loads and go on. I saw one couple, at least seventy years of age, with a rope around a piano, the man pulling and the woman pushing and to steady it from toppling over the woman would hold back about as much as the man would pull.

All over the city the booming of dynamite could be heard every few minutes, exploded ahead of the fire line. I walked over to the Union League club. They were taking down their oil paintings and carting them away to a place of safety. There were also heavy express wagons loaded with treasure from the banks, each guarded by a dozen armed men, going to safety deposit vaults. To give an idea of the value the use of any kind of wagon or transportation, one incident is mentioned: An officer of one of the banks stood on a corner stopping an express wagon to engage it to take his bank's specie away. "I am engaged and I can't do it," answered the cart man. "I'll pay you any price," said the banker, "or I'll buy your team. How much for it?" "I'll give it to you for \$500.00." "Come in and get your money." The banker paid \$500.00 in gold for the outfit and the clerks began carrying the money out to load in the wagon. The fire was approaching upon that block and they did not wait to gather up a thousand dollars of loose silver change left scattered about the drawers and on the counters. Automobiles were whirling about the city in every direc-

tion. Occasionally a soldier with a musket would stop the auto, the driver and occupants would be ordered out, the name of the owner of the machine taken, its number, the owner's address, and the officers needing it in the emergency would press it into service.

It requires a more vivid pen than mine to describe the incidents around me and the horrors covering every portion of the city. I watched them all day. At 9 o'clock at night I stood in front of the Alexander hotel where my trunk had been left the night before on the ninth floor. It had been useless to attempt getting it down. Twenty-five to \$50.00 for each floor was time and again refused by porters. The only vehicle drivers on the street charged \$25.00 to \$100.00 for taking a family to the ferry landing. Automobiles for hire cleared from \$100.00 to \$200.00 for the same service. At nine o'clock at night all the people in Union square were ordered to move away, as the fire would be on them in half an hour. So loath were they to leave, it required soldiers with fixed bayonets to move them.

The St. Francis hotel and the Alexander were ordered vacated at 9:30 o'clock at night. When this order came in company with three others I started for the Presidio, nine miles away, thinking we might find shelter in the military post. All day long the great crowds had been drifting into Golden Gate park and it was now estimated that a hundred thousand people were there. Almost a panic was created by the rumor that a tidal wave from the ocean would flood the park. This, of course, was without

foundation, but it served the purpose of prolonging the exciting misery.

Our route was up Geary in the middle of the street. After walking an hour we were halted by soldiers and turned off of Geary street two or three blocks west, continuing on towards Van Ness street, which we reached just at midnight and on a piece of vacant ground adjoining the street, ten or fifteen thousand people were crowded.

In our travels we had heard that a final attempt would be made to stop the fire over at the east end of Van Ness street and we concluded to rest where we were until morning. Almost every inch of space was occupied. There was no drinking water. Women and children were famishing from thirst. It was rumored someone was selling water and that they had been shot down immediately. Along this route we saw great fissures in the street. I lay on a carpenter's bench with my satchel under my head, all that I had saved of my baggage. In half an hour I had quite enough of that kind of rest, and waking up my companions we again started for the Presidio, still three miles away. There came along two or three persons who greeted my companions. They said the ferry was running and they were going to Oakland. That being my direction, I immediately joined them and went down Van Ness street west to the ocean shore.

The condition of the people and the sights and scenes along the route up the ocean and bay shore were like those we had passed. A one-horse express wagon was hailed by a woman who asked the driver his price for carrying her to the ferry. Turning to



one or two acquaintances she gave out that she carried \$105.00 and turning to the expressman for his answer he said: "I'll carry you for \$100.00." Four soldiers with muskets, just off of duty, were passing and hearing the argument they ordered the expressman to put the woman's bundles in his wagon and carry them to the ferry without delay. Two soldiers accompanied them. When at the ferry house the driver was ordered to carry the bundles into the waiting room and he was told, "Now you can go." "But who pays me?" asked the driver. "You get nothing," said one of the soldiers, "Go!"

We had followed along the shore the long tedious miles to the ferry. On all sides there were men, women and children, Chinamen,—in fact people of all nationalities and in every condition of life, many had lugged along their loads until they could go no further. We carried our satchels, which by this time began to get very heavy, making it necessary to put them down every two hundred yards or so and rest and I may add that many was the time I would look at my satchel on the ground and wonder if I had not carried it long enough. Then the thought would come to me, "It may be weeks and perhaps I may be in the bread line before I can get any more clothing," so I clung to the satchel. Many men, women and children, some of them bare-footed, carried no bundles, all their worldly possessions consisting of what they wore. It is difficult to tell whether their condition was as deplorable as the many who had attempted to carry away what they had saved.

We began our walk the second time for the ferry half an hour after midnight and reached the ferry house at 8:30 a. m., after almost twelve hours steady walking. The glare of the fire lighted up the streets so that it was by no means dark. It was pitiful to pass the droves of Chinamen, women and children, Japanese and all manner of yellow-skinned people. The Chinese way of carrying their loads was with a pole resting on their shoulder between two men, the load often weighing two hundred and fifty pounds. The Chinese have always been much disliked in San Francisco. This made no difference. When it came to the bread line no favor was shown that the Chinese did not share, but in all cases each man and woman took care of his and her belongings.

A mother lying on a bundle not twenty feet away got up every few minutes and raised a lace curtain that had been thrown over a baby carriage in which a child was sleeping. She did not disturb it and lay down again on her bundle. She and the baby had been separated from the husband and father.

When we started again at one o'clock I realized what the thirty hours had carried me through. Had I known the sights and scenes of misery I would encounter in reaching a place of safety and rest I might have hesitated and said: "Not another block." With still ten or fifteen miles ahead of us, we walked on and came in sight of the towers of the ferry house. It seemed we could never reach it through the throngs of people of all ages, sexes, colors and conditions of life.

Many were lying flat on their backs in the dirt with a wrap thrown over their faces, whether dead

or alive we could not tell. As we neared the ferry house these scenes increased. People were tugging at fallen and burned buildings along the way to rescue the dead or injured. There was no noise. Every soul depended upon himself and every one had a serious task to take care of himself or herself and their children.

Down towards the Golden Gate there were many government tugs, launches and private boats. These were seized upon early in the day. Like many another not acquainted with the city and its outlets I had no such easy way of reaching Oakland across the bay or the islands. I had lost Mr. Cartan and all the acquaintances I had in the great crowd. Business of all kinds was suspended by nine a. m. People generally felt that the city was doomed and all that could be saved must be carried on their backs.

\* \* \*

### THE MARINE'S STORY.

One arm was buttoned under his overcoat. A handsome, intelligent looking chap, came over to me at the station in Oakland, where I was waiting to take the train for the east, and said: "Ain't we in luck to have plenty of good grub before us?"

"Tell me, what accident befell you?" I asked.

"I was on duty," said the marine, "between the Grand and Palace hotels. A squad of marines just arrived and I was to be relieved when somebody said: 'Look at the little girl up in the window.' Three stories above in the Palace hotel, the glare of fire had already begun to show through the glass of

every window. The boys bunched up and made a ladder and put me on top, because I was going off duty. I kicked the window glass in, gathered all the bed clothing I could, wrapped it about the young girl and started back. Just then 300 pounds of dynamite was exploded a block east and we were blown out of the window and fell on the tangled telephone and telegraph wires. Someone carried the girl away, uninjured. In the fall, my shoulder blade was broken and this arm broken twice. I just now came from the hospital and have thirty days off and came to see a chum going east."

The entire depot was in possession of the Relief committee. Girls, young and old, mothers and the best of humanity were there to offer every living human being, who would ask for it, coffee and sandwiches. They were offered to me a dozen times, but notwithstanding my being short of money I was not penniless, and not likely to get into the "bread line."

In Oakland, money was money. A letter of credit, drafts on banks or anything usually recognized as money would not get you one penny, or buy a meal. I had agreed to pay the fare of a young man who had helped to "pull me through" the long night's walk to Oakland, as far as Omaha.

"If I could get New York drafts cashed, at the ticket office," I said to the agent, "I have a New York draft for \$100.00. Give me a ticket to Omaha (the price of which was about \$80.00), and the balance in currency."

"Nothing but cash will buy a ticket of any kind for any distance. This is our order," said the agent.

As I turned away a gentleman tapped me on the arm and said:

"My friend, I heard all of the common sense you told that agent, I'll cash your draft."

"Then come up town with me and let me convince you that you are taking no risk, and I will be glad to accept the kindness," I replied.

John T. Bell, who recently published *The Omaha Mercury*, was the only man I knew in Oakland and to him and to his most estimable wife, who was a Miss McClandish, brought up in Omaha, I am everlastingly grateful, for their kind hospitality and the efforts of Mr. Bell to help me "pull through." Mr. Bell was in his real estate office and to the stranger accompanying me said all the things necessary to convince anyone of the truth of my "tale of woe." Meanwhile the stranger counted out five twenty-dollar gold pieces and asked me to endorse the draft. "I am satisfied," he said.

This gentleman positively refused to accept one cent for exchange or any pay whatever for his kindness in helping me out of a serious dilemma. His name and address is.....

..... and if he ever travels my way, I will try and convince him that his great kindness to me, under circumstances that seldom befall a man in a lifetime, is not forgotten.



## THE BATTLE OF SUMMIT SPRINGS, NEBRASKA, JULY, 1869

After the battle of Beaver creek, the command was marched to Fort Wallace, Kansas, where it remained for several days refitting and organizing pack trains preparatory to operations during the coming winter in accordance with orders from Major General P. H. Sheridan, commanding the department of the Missouri, who planned this campaign, which was carried out under his personal direction. It included columns from three different points, the Seventh cavalry commanded by Brevet Major General George A. Custer to operate from Camp Supply, Indian Territory; the Third cavalry under Major Evans to operate from Fort Bascom, New Mexico; the Fifth cavalry under Brevet Major General E. A. Carr from Fort Lyon, Colorado, and a flying column under Brevet Brigadier General Penrose, Captain Third infantry, also from Fort Lyon. These columns were expected to converge toward a point known as "the Antelope hills" near the Washita river, the object being to close in on the hostile Commanches, Kiowas, Arapahoes and Cheyennes known to be in force on the Washita river and its tributaries north of Texas, in what is now

---

(Note—The above graphic story was written for this volume by Brigadier General Hayes, an old and close friend of the author, at his earnest solicitation. Hayes county, Nebraska, was named for General ("Captain Jack") Hayes, in appreciation of his services in ridding the western part of Nebraska from hostile Indians.—R. F. G.)

known as Oklahoma. General Carr's command reached Fort Lyon late in December, 1868, and after a few days' rest there, followed on the trail of the flying column under General Penrose. This column had preceded General Carr's command about ten days or two weeks, but, through the inexperience of his scouts and trailers, had become lost and failing to communicate with headquarters caused grave concern. The trail made by General Penrose was erratic and over exceedingly rough country, almost impassable for wagons, his supplies being carried on pack mules.

The weather was cold and fuel scarce on this march and much suffering was caused thereby. General Penrose's trail at times being so indistinct that it was hard to follow, but after much difficulty his command was overtaken in camp where it had been for several days so broken down as to be unfit for service and unable to move and practically out of rations. After furnishing the needed supplies, the combined command under General Carr was marched south to the Canadian river, which was reached in a heavy snow storm. Here was discovered the trail of Major Evans' command following the river in an easterly course in the direction of Antelope hills where we later learned he had struck the Indians and gained a brilliant victory. General Custer with his column also struck the Indians further east and fought and won the historic battle of the Wishita. General Carr's command, however, failed to come in contact with any Indians and after spending the winter scouting returned to Fort Lyon, Colorado, early in the spring of 1869.

From there I took advantage of a leave of absence to visit my family, and rejoined the regiment at Fort McPherson, Nebraska, May, 1869. During my absence, the regiment had been transferred from the department of the Missouri to the Department of the Platte, and en route to join its new station, Fort McPherson, Nebraska, had a successful encounter with a hostile band of Sioux Indians not far from the fort.

Early in June, 1869, the Republican river expedition under Brevet Major General Carr—of which I was its acting quartermaster and commissary—consisting of seven troops of the Fifth cavalry and a battalion of friendly Pawnee Indians—the latter under Major Frank North, an experienced Indian fighter—left Fort McPherson to operate against renegade Sioux, Cheyenne and Arapahoe Indians, known as “Dog Soldiers,” and led by the fierce and savage chief, Tall Bull, who had been creating terror and dismay amongst the settlers living in the exposed counties of Kansas, Nebraska and Colorado, and was the scourge of that whole territory, capturing and killing women and children and in many instances torturing them in the most fiendish manner. General Carr, who was selected to follow and chastise these Indians, was a noted Indian fighter, with a thorough knowledge of Indian character and methods. He had served against Indians for many years prior to and subsequent to the civil war. No better commander could have been chosen.

The trail of the Indians was picked up in a few days and was followed persistently and with excellent judgment until the Indians' fears were par-



tially allayed and they became careless in their watchfulness. This resulted in giving General Carr his opportunity, when cutting loose from his wagon trains, by forced marches night and day, he surprised their main camp at Summit Springs, Nebraska, in broad daylight, July 11, 1869,—something almost unprecedented in Indian warfare, especially on the plains. This result was due in a great measure to the daring and guidance of Colonel William F. Cody—"Buffalo Bill"—chief of scouts, who discovered the village and led the troops to the position they were to occupy in the attack without the knowledge of the Indians. This was considered the greatest of the many achievements of this wonderful scout. In the unexpected charge on them which followed, the Indians became more or less scattered and in consequence the fighting was of the "hand to hand" order and continued for some time in the village and over the prairie, ending in a complete victory for the troops, the death of Tall Bull and sixty-five or seventy of his chief warriors, the destruction of the village and capture of the squaws and children and hundreds of ponies, etc., and also the rescue of two white women captives who had been tomahawked by the squaws. One soon died, but the other ultimately recovered. The command remained a day on the battlefield and then proceeded with the captured prisoners and animals to the nearest military post on the line of the Union Pacific railroad for further instructions and additional supplies.

Summit Springs, the scene of this engagement, was a noted camping ground for immigrant and government teams on the overland trail to California,

F 5-11  
C684  
1911

and was located near the Platte river on the west boundary line between Colorado and Nebraska, the conformation being basin-shaped with a high rim surrounding which concealed the spring from observation.

This campaign and engagement resulted in ridding the frontier borders of these states of hostile Indians and bringing peace to the distracted settlers.

E. M. HAYES,  
Brigadier General U. S. A.









